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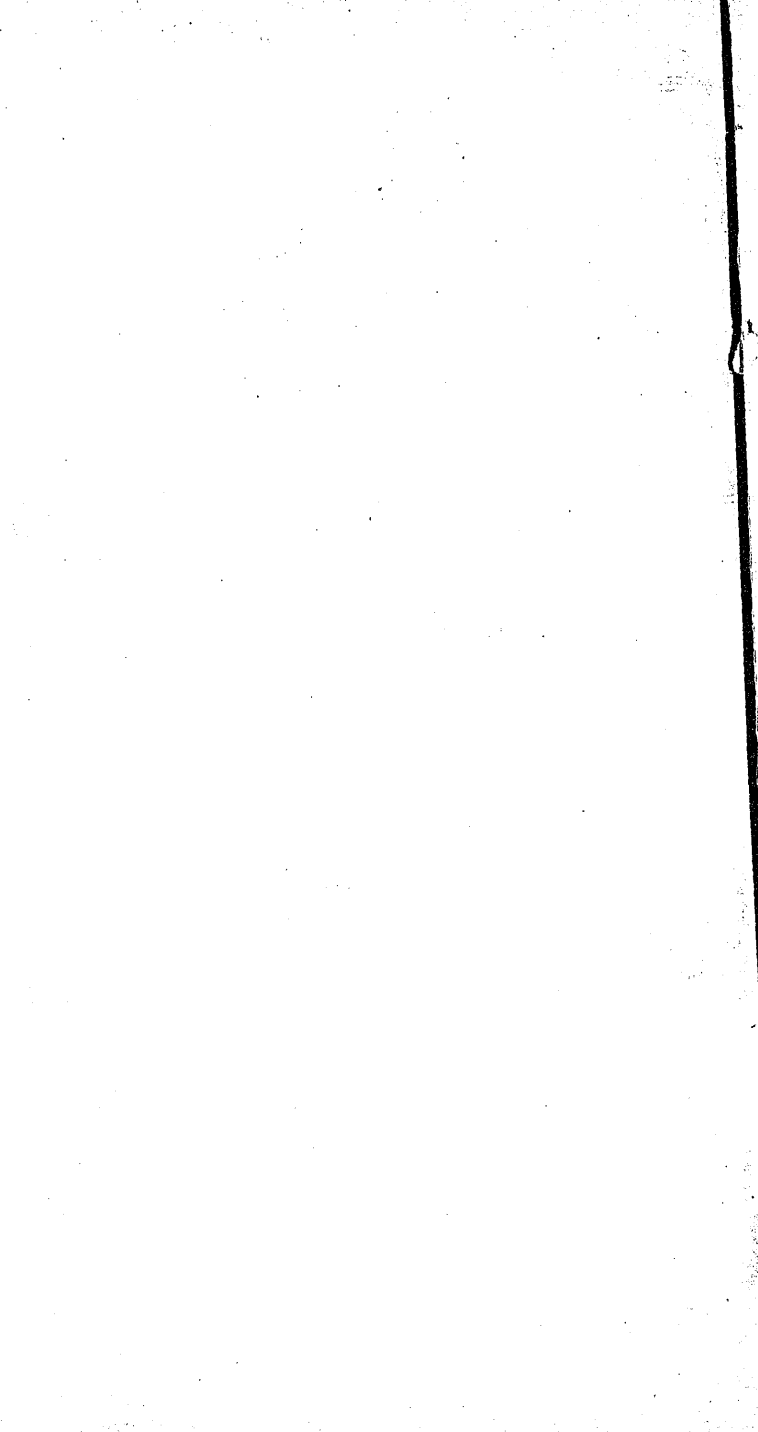
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PRACTICAL EVANGELISM.



# PRACTICAL EVANGELISM:

OR

## BIBLE CHRISTIANITY ENFORCED.

BY

WILLIAM M. CHEEVER,  
TERRE-HAUTE, INDIANA.

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"HE THAT WINNETH SOULS IS WISE."

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TO

THE REV. LYMAN BEECHER, D.D.,

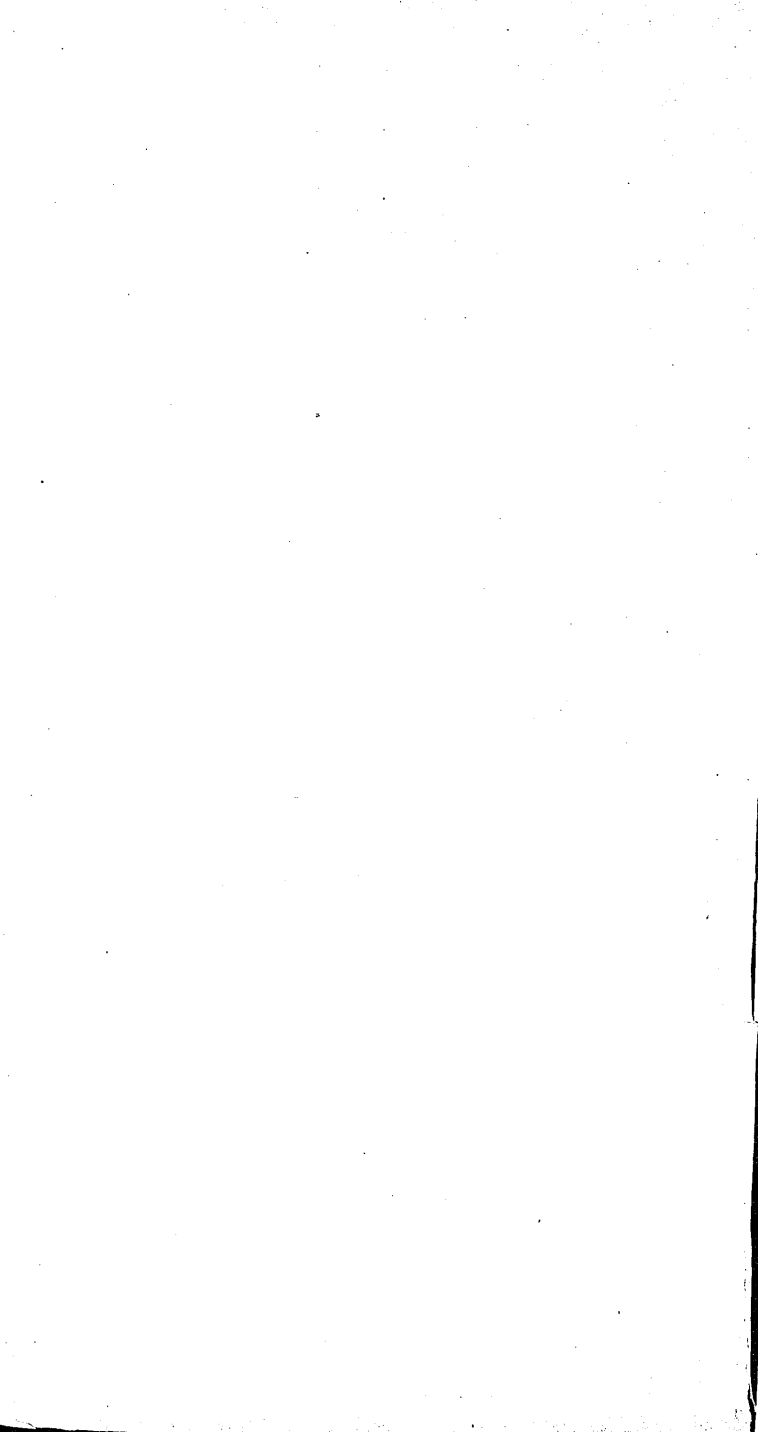
TO WHOM, UNDER GOD, THE WRITER IS MORE INDEBTED FOR WHAT  
HE IS, THAN TO ANY OTHER LIVING MAN, AND WHOSE LONG  
AND USEFUL MINISTERIAL LIFE HAS BEEN A LUCID  
EXPONENT OF THE SENTIMENTS OF  
THIS ESSAY,

T H E S E P A G E S

ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

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“Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” Jeremiah 6: 16.

“Truly, if ever there was a period when the whole Christian world should lie down upon their faces before the throne of mercy, imploring with all the importunity, and boldness, and perseverance of faith, a race of ministers, each full of the Holy Ghost, — that period is passing over us.”  
DR. SKINNER.

“The faith delivered to the saints, produced a piety of great solemnity, and ardor, and decision, . . . a love to Jesus Christ so ardent, an avowal of his doctrines so undaunted, and an enterprise so efficient, as moved on from conquering to conquer, through good report and evil, through honor and dishonor, through fire and blood.”  
DR. BEECHER.

“O Lord, revive thy work!” Habakkuk 3: 2.



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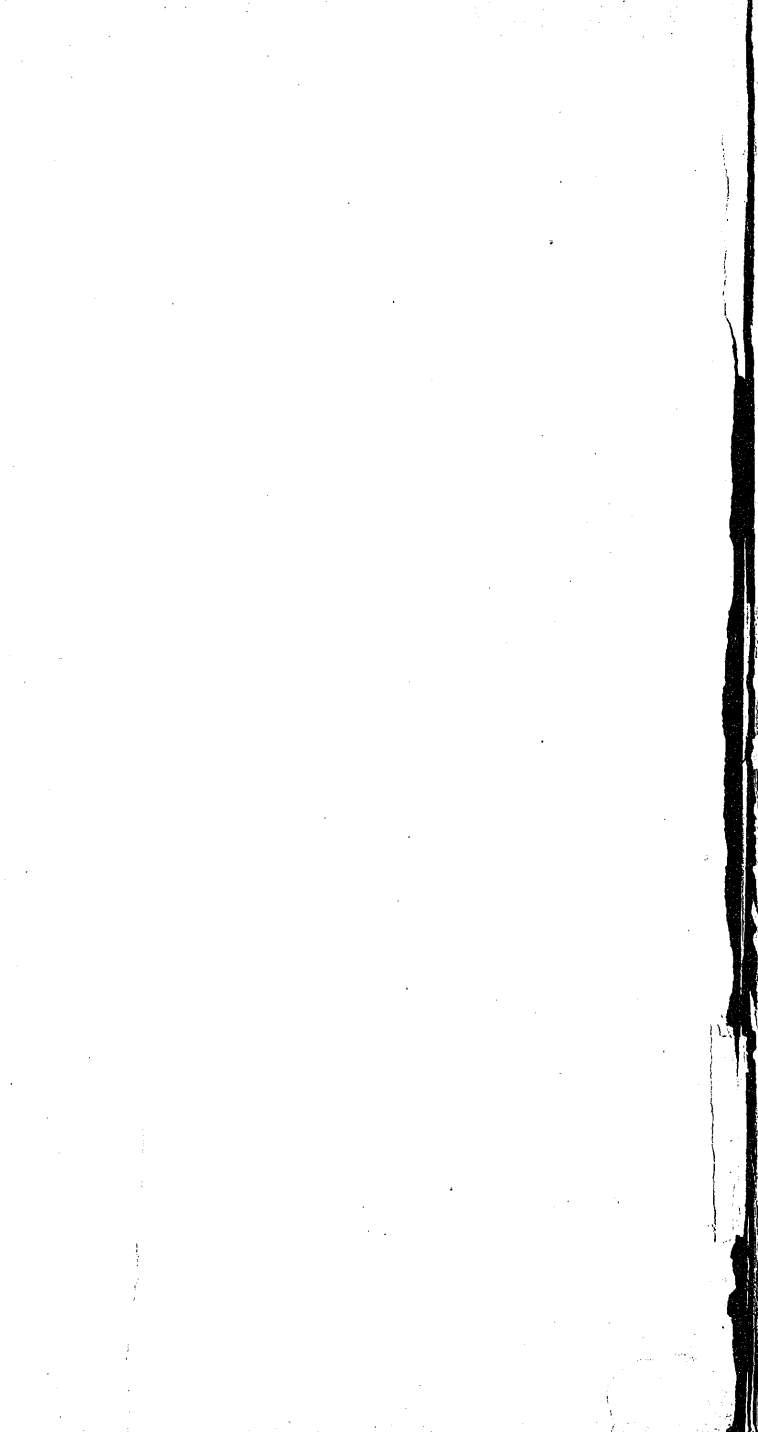
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# PRACTICAL EVANGELISM,

OR

## BIBLE CHRISTIANITY.

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### CHAPTER I.

“GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE.” — Mark 16: 15.

“CAST YE UP, CAST YE UP; PREPARE THE WAY, TAKE UP THE STUMBLINGBLOCK OUT OF THE WAY OF MY PEOPLE!” — Isa. 57: 14.

EVERY thing connected with, or relating to the Gospel, is important. Whether you speak of the advent of the Son of God, or recount the labors of the humble missionary who goes forth to proclaim glad tidings to the lost; whether you regard it as illustrated in the “God have mercy on me a sinner!” of the penitent who kneels at the cross, or as in the new song of that great multitude which no man can number — it is grand.

That feature of this subject which we now propose to examine, is of great practical moment, and crowded with intense interest.

By *Practical Evangelism*, is meant the promulgation of the Gospel; the constant, faithful, and successful enforcement of the doctrines of the Cross, for the conversion of sinners to God; the development and consecration of the Christian church to this grand object; the sacred employment of all those means which the Great Head of the church has furnished to bring men of all classes and of all climes into an experimental acquaintance with the Gospel.

In developing and enforcing this subject, it shall be our duty:—

I. TO SET FORTH THE DEFECTS OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER WHICH HINDER THE TRIUMPH OF THE REDEEMER'S KINGDOM ON THE EARTH; AND THE CAUSES OF THESE DEFECTS.

The Redeemer's Kingdom! What is it? What are the elements of its power? How does it differ from the kingdoms of this world, in its origin, object, the means of its triumph, its duration, and universality, are questions which, at this time and place, we cannot stop to answer. In the sublime petition, "Thy kingdom come," we are taught that it shall extend over all this apostate world. That it shall spread, not through the influence of money, or intellectual greatness, or political power, or legislative diplomacy; but by the truth and the Spirit of God. The church of the Redeemer is the appointed herald of that truth. If the instrumentality be lame; if hinderances arise in the church, or in radical defects of Christian character, then there are serious obstacles which must be removed.

That obstacles to the spread of the Redeemer's

kingdom in the world exist, based upon radical defects in Christian character, is too true! obstacles real and gigantic; that do not arise alone from the nature of that kingdom, nor from external forms of vice, nor from unholy and malicious combinations to oppose the truth,—nor from the various types of infidelity afloat, nor from modes of church government, but from *radical defects in Christian character*,—obstacles, which if all the others were removed, would be potent enough to hinder the cause; and which, if removed, and all the others existing, would annihilate the greatest difficulties in the way of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Such obstacles exist. They are palpable. They should be contemplated, mourned over, and removed. The Redeemer's kingdom should no longer find its greatest opposition in the lukewarmness or inconsistency of its professed friends. There should be no traitors, at least in the citadel. What are they? First, and parent of many others, stands out the WORLDLY SPIRIT—that caring for the flesh which the apostle has tersely denominated the "carnal mind." It is appalling enough to witness the fruit of that spirit in the lives of the "children of disobedience," blinding their minds, searing their consciences, and rendering impotent for their good, the powers of the world to come; but to behold that spirit lifting up its head in the church of God, swaying its sceptre over minds professing to be renewed in the spirit and temper of Christ, is overwhelming, and should prompt the deprecatory prayer, "*Cast us not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us.*"

"Should some angelic company travelling through

the empire of their Creator, arrive for the first time on the confines of our orb, and be informed that to the myriads whom they behold, the gates of everlasting happiness had been opened by their God and Saviour, would they not with intuitive rapidity conclude, that with hearts beating high with hope, this vast multitude was preparing for the heavenly inheritance? And when, after gazing a little longer they should ascertain the real anxieties and business, and pleasures of men, what would be their second emotion?

“‘Dim sadness would not spare  
That day, celestial visages.’”

But a far sadder sight have we every day to contemplate; a sight that might almost unstring the harps of heaven: the spirit of the world in the church supplanting the Spirit of God; and the “spiritual” gradually receding before the impudent encroachment of the “carnal.” Those professing to be the purchase of Infinite Love, the heirs of infinite glory, debasing themselves to the spirit and level of the purely worldly man! Those redeemed to be “a peculiar people, zealous of good works,” conforming to the world in aims, desires, and labors, insomuch that we dare not apply to them the eulogy of Christ, “*they are not of the world.*” Deep in the heart of the church seem to be imbedded habits of worldly feeling and action. Not only is there a bias or tendency that way, but there is absolute worldly conformity. In selfishness, in pleasure seeking, in ambition and love of applause, in mammon worship, and in the engrossing cares of this world, the church has, too

often, forgotten her high position, and another spirit, entirely antagonistic to the spirit of true piety, seems to hold dominion in the body of Christ.

And all this too, in the face of such unambiguous declarations as these:—"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." "If any man will be a friend of the world, he is the enemy of God." "Ye are the light of the world." "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world."

Again we say, that for a member of the church of the living God, the "peculiar people," to yield to the unsanctified spirit of the world, is sad; but when we see multitudes of them swept along before that tide, and pride, avarice, and pleasure dash their waves over the very ark of God, it is truly appalling. The church coming to the world, instead of drawing up the world to it! A worldly-minded Christian—what a paradox! When such a spirit has bound the church of God, and when through its withering power her strength is paralyzed, can we be wrong in saying, that here we are to find the principal hindrance to the triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom on the earth?

This will be still more apparent when we consider another hindrance, of which this is the parent, namely:—

2. *Want of every-day Practical Religion.* There is not as much Sabbath day religion as there should be, but it is too often almost the only kind we have, the only religion that is any thing more than a sentiment, that manifests itself to the world, and then it

cannot often be distinguished from the religion of the *worldly man*. He goes to church with us punctually, sits by us, hears the word, sings God's praise apparently with as much unction; but there his religion ends, and alas! that it must be admitted, in the main, ours too. In what respect, then, does the piety of the nominal Christian differ from that of the worldly man? We say, with us, religion is a reality, a living, working principle. With him, it is a mere form. That his is mere form, there can be no doubt, but that ours is uniformly a reality, we take issue. In what respect is it a living, working principle? In what respect does it resemble the apostolic type, for in all our wandering and progress, we must go back to that.

We have the theoretical religion, but have we the practical? We have the fig-tree, sufficiently fair and pleasing to the eye, *but it bears no fruit*, and "by their fruits ye shall know them." And here is it that the Redeemer's kingdom is retarded. Our *light does not shine*, with a daily and increasing radiancy. We have not such manifest good works, upspringing from faith and love, that men — all men — see them and glorify God.

3. A third hindrance is, *Want of identity with Christ*, — in the aim of his mission; and in the practical work of converting the world, and subjecting empires to the peaceable reign of the Messiah.

To judge from appearances, the number of those who practically acknowledge that Christ's cause and theirs is *one and the same*, is small. If a jury of angels or men was called upon to draw a conclusion from the general character of our labor, (so long

divided between the world and Christ,) they would hardly be able to tell with which interest we were the most cordially identified.

No wonder the cause has been retarded, when it has been doubtful on which side the professed champions of the truth would declare themselves, — when the great majority of those who have covenanted before the world that they would “know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and him crucified,” have known the world almost as much as Christ! — when they have forgotten that by the very nature of the spiritual union between them and the Redeemer, all the identity of aim, and practical labor which it implies, is solemnly pledged.

This want of individual identity with the interests of the kingdom, spring in part from another radical defect in Christian character, namely: —

4. *Want of love to Christ.* It is a pity that the rebuke of John to the church at Ephesus, should be so often and generally merited. “I have somewhat against thee, because *thou hast left thy first love.*” It is lamentable that so *few* of the disciples of Jesus are noted for such intense ardor in his service that they can with Paul cry out, “the love of Christ constrains us.” That so *few* of us can with Peter, appealing to the omniscient One, exclaim, “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.” With such a love, as that which sent Paul, and Whitefield, and Edwards, like burning seraphs through the churches, bearing the message of Divine truth to dying men, how would the Gospel spread. Then the angel of God might stand with trumpet in hand and cry,



“Fly abroad, thou mighty Gospel;  
Win and conquer, never cease.”

But our “first love” has grown cold! other objects divide our hearts. Christ is not alone on the throne. Unworthy idols have crowded in. Our love is too often a cold abstraction, and not a living, energizing principle. Too often is it merely an intellectual exercise. It is not that gushing up of the whole heart and soul—that all-absorbing passion which the Psalmist felt when he said, “Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth whom I desire beside thee!” “As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.”

5. Another defect is *want of solicitude for souls*,—an interest real, abiding, commensurate with the unspeakable interests at stake—and altogether befitting a pardoned sinner and child of God,—not an impulsive and spasmodic anxiety, but one springing from Christian principle,—not a mere transient sympathy, but a genuine, ruling passion, excited by the Spirit of God, in view of their condition as seen in the light of the world to come.

Such interest made Paul exclaim, “My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.” Such a solicitude became the ruling passion in Page and McCheyne and Brainerd, and the first modern missionaries to India.

Does not observation and experience constrain us to conclude that such interest does not now generally prevail? Doubtless it exists in many isolated cases; but it is rather the exception than the general

rule. Occasionally do we find one weighed down with this holy solicitude for immortal beings under condemnation — on the brink of death — exposed to the wrath of God. But on the part of most of us, there is apathy, deep, abiding, mournful, and guilty, — deep, for nothing seems able to disturb it, — abiding, for it is the prevailing characteristic, — mournful, for it is apathy over souls going down to death eternal, — guilty, because it is a direct violation of the command of God and of our covenant vow.

6. From this arises another radical defect in Christian character, namely, *Want of true and Christ-like sympathy for the poor and downcast*: the want of a deep and genuine feeling of true brotherhood with all classes of men of all climes and castes. Among all professed Christians there is too much of the leaven of aristocracy; too much of the feeling of Simon, in whose house Jesus dined, when he would have rebuked the erring woman who wept at Jesus' feet, and Jesus also for not spurning her. We are deficient in true benevolence of heart, in a genuine feeling of brotherhood. It is too much a cold abstraction with us, that we are all brethren; that no matter how unlike in education, in refinement, in morals all men are, they are our neighbors, and we should love them, search them out, and show them a real interest, like that of Jesus for the outcast.

That the want of this genuine sympathy is always a radical defect in Christian character, eminently adapted to retard the Redeemer's kingdom, is apparent, if we look at the number of vagrants, poor and despised ones, — at the hundreds of vile and abandoned crowding every large town and city through-

out our republic, — at the thousands of foreigners who are rapidly filling up our States and territories, — and at our three and a half millions of slaves. With regard to all these, are we not too much inclined to stand aloof?

Let them feel the warm beating of our hearts; hearts yearning over them with a true love and large benevolence. It will, by the grace of God, melt away these icy barriers.

7. Another common defect is the *want of a living faith*, — as an active, controlling principle, “actually subordinating things earthly to things heavenly,” — a faith that is as far above mere formalism as the spiritual transcends the material; a faith which is the proof indubitable of deep, heartfelt religion; the sure “evidence of things not seen;” that springs from the inner life, and regulates and controls the outward; which establishes the perfect harmony between a rich, overflowing, personal experience, and an active life consecrated to practical evangelism.

Such a faith in the church of God, save in rare instances, is wanting. It is a *radical defect* in Christian character, without which the man is of no more practical use, than an engine without motive power. Alas! that it should be so! that our faith should be *dead*, — a mere body without a soul, — a theory without living power, — a mere vapid sentiment, that energizes no soul, that makes sublime no life, that lifts no one above the world, and that does not make the powers of the world to come living and present realities.

No wonder the Redeemer’s kingdom is retarded!

8. Hence, too, for want of a *Living Faith*, arises

want of true *Moral Courage*. Holy boldness enables the child of God, in the defence of his principles and the truth of his God, to stand up before any foe, and say with Peter, “*Whether is it right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye!*” Or with Luther, “*We can do no other — so help us God!*”

But we are too afraid of *public opinion*; for the public, all the world over, is yet against God, the church, and the right. We are afraid of being called *singular*, or *fanatical*, or *pious*, when we should “*glory in the cross.*” We too much resemble the frightened band in Gethsemane, who all “*forsook him and fled.*” We, who should know no fear, — who should maintain the honor of God, and the interests of Christ’s kingdom to the death, have forgotten this word, “*Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you.*” “*Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*”

9. Want of *true Gospel self-denial*, such as Christ taught, the apostles preached, and the early Christians practised: who did not consider themselves their own; who felt they were bought with a price: who endured the loss of all things, that they might win Christ, “*and be found in him;*” who counted not their own lives dear; who endured persecution; who took up their cross daily and followed Christ, through evil as well as through good report; who responded heartily to the consecration motto, “*So we have left all, and followed thee.*”

So far from this being true in the main, of the pro-

fessed church of God, it is now only true of the exceptions. Nay, the *reverse* of all this would seem to be true!

But as this matter of faith and self-denial is a question of vital importance, the more full discussion of it must be reserved for separate chapters.

10. From this springs another defect, which we can only in this place mention — the *want of a true and enlarged liberality*, — an entire consecration of ALL to God; of body, mind, will, affections, influence, time, friends, money, of all we are and hope to be. Such consecration the Jews had when they built the tabernacle, and every man, woman, and child brought any and all the treasures they possessed, until Moses told them to forbear! he had *enough, and too much!* (See also 2 Cor. 8: 7. 9: 6, 7, 8. Acts 20: 35. 2: 44. Matt. 10: 8.) How few of us “remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that it is more blessed to give than to receive.”

11. We cannot here forbear to mention as a defect in our church development, as well as a defect in Christian character, the *want of hearty, efficient lay coöperation* in developing the resources of the church.

The labor of practical evangelism is too exclusively thrown upon the ministry, who often have themselves alone to blame for it. An intelligent and rich layman in the West said to his pastor, “Do not ask me to attend prayer-meeting, or pray, or any thing of that sort; I cannot do that. But if *money* will aid you, just tell me what you want, and you shall have it!” While it is a matter of rejoicing that some few of our opulent members are liberal with their money, it is a great defect in our method,

that most of the lay brethren are virtually excluded from the work of practical Christianity. Hence their dwarfish spiritual stature, and hence, too, the dragging of the wheels of Evangelism. True, all our members cannot, even by the most incessant and cordial coöperation, develop into such Christians as Harlan Page and Jeremiah Evarts, but a great many more can than do.

Are these things so, dear brethren? "I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say." Do these defects in Christian character really exist, or is this note of alarm premature?

Is it true that I am hindering the triumphs of the Redeemer's kingdom? That I am really in the way of the spread of the Gospel and the conversion of souls? While the last days are coming on with their overwhelming responsibilities, I am not ready to meet them. While the world is opening for the bread of life, I am not prepared to give it. While one holy example would tell for infinite good, and one shining light would save some shipwrecked mariner, my example is pernicious and my light has gone out.

I, even I, a professed child of God, an heir of heaven, bought with blood, an avowed coworker with Christ, I am in the way! I who daily pray, "Thy kingdom come!" am raising up gigantic hindrances to the rapid spread of that kingdom throughout the earth! God have mercy on me, and help me to remove them!

## CHAPTER II.

### THE CAUSES OF THESE DEFECTS.

---

“Go, SET A WATCHMAN, LET HIM DECLARE WHAT HE SEETH.”—  
Isa. 21 : 6.

WITHIN the limit of this Essay it will be impossible to elaborate this topic. We can at most but specify a few leading causes.

#### 1. *Defective Household Instruction.*

In the first place, children are not taught prompt, cheerful obedience. They are suffered to have their own way. Hence, when they come into the kingdom, they are wilful and impulsive.

In the second place, they are not taught to consider themselves as belonging entirely to God, as solemnly consecrated, like Samuel, from the birth to their Saviour. They have hardly the first idea of consecration. They are taught to be selfish and worldly.

They see that the world is the parent's god. Is it strange that when they arrive at manhood they should practically reject religion, Christ, and heaven?

The father of Hannibal took his young son when nine years old, when the solemnity of the transaction would produce the most vivid impression on his

imagination, and made him swear over the altar of his god, with his hand on the victim, eternal hatred to the Romans. The Carthaginian general in all his after career never forgot that lesson.

If with something of that solemnity, parents would devote their young children upon the altar of God to the holy cause of evangelizing the world, the lesson would never be forgotten.

An eminently useful clergyman in one of our large western cities has furnished the writer of this Essay with the following testimony to the fidelity of parental instruction. He says: "My mother was a pious woman. My earliest recollection of her is connected with my standing at her side, Sabbath afternoon, to learn from her lips the catechism, before I could read.

"When I first began to indulge a hope of forgiveness and acceptance with Christ, she thus addressed me.

"My son, when you were a child I dedicated you to God. I gave you away wholly to him, and now if you wish to consecrate yourself to his service to be a minister or a missionary, I give my full consent. If God calls you to go to the other side of the globe, I shall not oppose it.' I had never before thought of it. But the idea that MY MOTHER had thus early devoted me to God, so impressed my mind that within one month I had determined, by Divine aid, to enter the ministry."

May God multiply the number of such mothers. Oh! that the children of the church and covenant had such mothers as the mother of Samuel of old and the mother of Samuel J. Mills,—mothers, who



as they watched their infant slumbers, and guided their infant steps, would consecrate them on God's altar to the work of practical evangelism.

2. The want of a *thorough ecclesiastical training* is another cause.

The last direction of the great Shepherd to Simon Peter was, "Feed my lambs!" The wise and faithful under-shepherd has no greater responsibility than that of taking care of the flock over which the Holy Ghost has placed him. How many shepherds and elders have discharged this solemn duty with the charge of Paul to the elders of the church at Ephesus before them, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers."

Doctrine and duty ever go hand in hand, in the pastor's study and in the pastor's life. That shepherd who does not attempt to divorce devotional feeling and moral character; who unites properly and scripturally the *doctrinal* and *practical*, will feed the flock, and secure a symmetrical character. Alas! for the perfection of Zion and moral power of the army of Jesus, this has not been sufficiently done!

The doctrines of the Gospel must be truly, fully, and faithfully preached as the foundation of all practical religion. But too often have we forgotten that while the truth must be preached it must be practised also, — that while the child of God is orthodox, he must be to the world a living illustration of the truth, that while he is rooted and grounded in the faith, he must be a "living epistle known and read of all men."

We fail in the proper development of Christian

character if we have not nourished the lambs, if we have not instructed the ignorant, strengthened the feeble, guided the erring, controlled the strong, or developed the immature.

The strength of Zion is small, if, with patience and gentleness, we have not FED the flock of God.

Here it should be stated that many defects in Christian life are to be traced to a *defective ministrations of the word*. The method and style of preaching has not uniformly been sufficiently adapted to quicken and develop the church, and convert sinners. Sparkling essays and learned exegesis we have had; dissertations upon abstract ethics and concrete doctrines, and the externals of Christianity we have had. Good and great sermons embodying any amount of truth — models of sermons in their general arrangement, comprehensiveness, symmetry, and beauty, we have had.

But have they not too often been without heart or life or salvation to the hearer? They have had in them too little exposure of sin and of condemnation, — too little exhibition of Christ and of pardon, — too little of that close, practical, and earnest appeal which rouses the conscience and affects the heart.

We have not come from the altar of God with the "live coal" upon our lips, and cried, "Wo unto them that are at ease in Zion!"

Too often we merit the terrible criticism of Dr. Mason upon the sermon of a young clergyman: — "Its arrangement is good, its logic clear, and its language forcible, but it lacks one essential thing to entitle it to be called a Gospel sermon — *it has too little of Christ in it.*"

The great and precious doctrines which exhibit God in his holiness, and sin in its deformity, and the law in the extent and spirituality of its demands as a schoolmaster to bring sinners to Christ, have not been preached with sufficient clearness and fidelity.

This defective ecclesiastical training must be traced in part to the fact that many pastors, especially in our cities, have larger fields than they can cultivate WELL. This is partly their misfortune, for "the harvest is plenteous and the laborers are few," but it is also their fault. It is to be feared in this age of sharp denominational competition that sometimes pastors are tempted to preside over a larger household than they can rule well.

Too anxious for their own popularity, and not without that vanity which feeds upon "crowded houses," they have in some cases assumed a load which they cannot carry.

Some pastors have in their communion, under their special instruction, and for whose immortal interests they are accountable, from five hundred to one thousand souls, with a corresponding proportion of the ungodly. Upon the ministry of some pastors there wait every Sabbath from two to three thousand hearers. The "tallest arch-angel" before the throne could not faithfully guide and train and develop such a congregation.

Others, again, who have smaller congregations are ambitious to obtain larger ones, and often leave a small but important, for a more imposing and responsible position. "They know not what they do," for the spiritual and eternal interests of the smallest congregation might well task all a pastor's energies

and prayers. In this temptation, and for want of laborers, sometimes necessity, to occupy more ground than we can well cultivate, must be seen, without doubt, one cause for defective Christian character. The pastor's labor is diffused and not concentrated, the field half cultivated yields a corresponding crop, and the disappointed husbandman should not be amazed to find "thistles instead of wheat."

Another cause of this radical defect in Christian character, is too low a view of the nature of religion and the true mission of the church.

The standard of holy living would not be so low, the church would not so often hang her harp on the willow, and the Gospel banner would not go trailing in the dust, were it not that Christians have forgotten God's definition of religion, and substituted something else.

May God forgive us, if with the Bible in our hands, and Jesus before us, we have erred upon a point so vital.

True religion includes that inward piety by which God is acknowledged and loved, and the largest benevolence and purest charity exercised with reference to our fellow men. There can be no religion without these. A religious life is one of practical GODLINESS, in which the whole being of man is consecrated to God. He is wholly, not in part, on the Lord's side. Religion with him is not a profession merely, but a life. His physical, intellectual, and spiritual powers are developed and solemnly set apart to the service of his God. He feels most intensely that he is "not his own, but that he is bought with a price."

We have lost sight of the true mission of the church. We have lost sight of Calvary and Olivet, and the ascending Saviour, and those words of high and holy import, no longer stir up our souls like a battle trumpet, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

We have forgotten that our absorbing business is to make known the plan of salvation; to win souls to Christ, to evangelize the nations, to become the disseminators of God's word, and the almoners of God's bounty to the world. In a word, the true mission of the church is TO DO GOOD. In such a day of sad forgetfulness of our true work, the rebuke of Cotton Mather is in point:—

"Though the assertion fly never so much like a chain shot among us, and rake down all before it, I will again and again assert it, that we might every one of us do more good than we do. . . . I am not uncharitable in saying, I know not that assembly of Christians on earth which ought not to be a Bochim in this consideration."

But the question may be asked, how could such views of the nature of religion, and of the position and mission of the Redeemer's church so extensively prevail? I answer, because there are so many unconverted church-members, — so large a number, in all probability, who have never "passed from death to life." Who have embraced religion as something that will *save* them, rather than *purify* them; who are *religious*, but not *godly*, for selfishness has not been annihilated.

Five classes of persons have thus been introduced into the external communion and fellowship of

saints, who cannot truly form a part of that "glorious church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

First. Those who have been introduced through the influence of ecclesiastical education and *moral training*, and who naturally consider themselves members of the church, without any such radical change of heart as the Saviour intended when he said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Second. Those who have prematurely entered the church through the influence of *excitement*, and whose religion is that of mere sympathy and emotion, unproduced by the Spirit of God, and unaccompanied by any settled principle of action.

Third. Those who have been dragged in through the unholy ambition of unprincipled ministers, or the lust of a morbid *denominationalism*,—an ambition which places personal fame before the honor of God, and the welfare of souls; and a party zeal, which would "move earth and heaven to make one proselyte."

Fourth. Others again from worldly *gain*, sometimes for political purposes, have entered the external fold, and assumed the holy vows of allegiance to God, and with true Christians have pledged a hollow-hearted covenant, over the sacramental bread and wine.

If there be one class of ecclesiastical reprobates, under whose pernicious example and withering influence the church of the Redeemer groans more than any other, this is the class. "Have not I chosen you

twelve, and one of you is a devil?" "They went out from us, but they were not of us."

A fifth class are those who are truly *self-deceived*; who once thought they were Christians, but are now convinced they were not; who through temperament, or false instruction, or mental habits, have mistaken "good frames" and spasmodic zeal for that deliberate choice of God, as the chief end and portion of the soul, which is the beginning of "the kingdom" in the heart.

4. Another cause for these defects so common and radical, is the lamentable *decline of revivals*, of great purity and power. Pure revivals, under God, are the great instrumentality by which the truth is enforced and perpetuated upon the heart and conscience of the church. Give us revivals from God, and the "powers of the world to come" are present realities, and faith, indeed, "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Give us revivals such as the great Head granted to the apostolic church, and such as marked the era of Whitfield, the Tennants, and Edwards, and the wilderness puts on new and living beauty, immortal verdure springs up in the desert; the religion of the cross becomes a living impersonation of the Divine mind, and the church of the living God, in her rapidly augmenting moral power, "becomes clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners."

But let revivals decline, and there will be unbelief, insensibility, darkness, death, mildew, and famine. The standard of piety will go down. There will be

few comparatively to cry, "In the name of our God will we set up our banners!"

The true position of the child of God, and the high mission of the church will be forgotten. The line of demarcation between piety and policy will in the end become more dim. The spirit of the world will creep into the church. The foundations of the righteous will be shaken. The benevolence of the church will no longer be quickened into new life. The young men, with holy hearts and self-denying zeal, will no longer crowd into the gospel ministry, saying, "Here am I, send me." Zion will languish; her foes will exult. The "ground will become dry;" "the fruitful field a wilderness:" "great fear will no longer fall on every soul." Men will "make void God's law," and on "every side the wicked will be exalted."

Such unquestionably has been the result of the decline of revivals, upon the proper development of Christian character, and the power of the church of God.

5. Another cause of these defects is furnished in the *temptations* and *tendencies* of the age. It is an age of unparalleled activity, — an age of great prosperity, tempting to forgetfulness of God, in which multitudes are making haste to be rich, — in which the prayer of Agur is forgotten, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," — an age of speculation and commercial daring, where the motto on every lip is, "nothing venture, nothing have," — an age of compromise between might and right, — an age of "lower law" policy, — an age of demagogueism, and political legerdemain, in which old landmarks



are ruthlessly obliterated by men of vaulting ambition seeking popular applause,— an age in which appeals are made to the worst feelings of our nature; when cupidity, lust, and power carry away the weak and unstable, and frighten the timid into unmanly silence,— an age in which we too often are tempted to rely on forms and ceremonies, more than upon a living faith, and substitute denominationalism for Gospel evangelism,— an age of outward reform, to promote which we too often rely more upon external pressure and human agency, than upon the Divine word and Holy Spirit.

Now, before this spirit of the age, the Christian has too often bowed down. Terrified at the frown of the king, and the heat of the furnace, he has bowed the knee to the image on the plain of Dura. Before these temptations sharp and strong, and well planned, he has, alas! too often fallen, forgetting the warning, "Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour."

The Christian's principle has been diluted with policy. His faith has been supplanted by sight. The inner life has been neglected. His character has been marred. His influence destroyed, and the Redeemer's kingdom retarded.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE MODEL CHARACTER.

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“BUT GROW UP INTO HIM IN ALL THINGS.” — Eph. 4 : 15.

“I LIVE, YET NOT I, BUT CHRIST LIVETH IN ME.” — Gal. 2 : 20.

MEN have always had their models. The youthful politician, just entering that arena where so many trip and fall to rise no more, has his model. The lawyer, the merchant, the artist, each has his model, either some real person in the past or present, or some imaginary character enthroned in his ideal world.

So the Christian, in deciding upon any course of action, or in the general regulation of his conduct, is apt to look around for an example. Whom shall I follow? what is my standard? are questions often asked.

In apostolic times it was said, “I am of Paul; I am of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.” Eminent saints in the exercise of some Christian grace, now stand before the minds of many as the true model of Christian character. Some have taken Wesley, some Leighton, some Payson, some Page, some Mrs. Edwards, as their standard of Christian

excellence. Whatever may have been the trait of character in which some distinguished saint excelled, and which having had peculiar attractions for peculiar minds, it has become a model on which it was another's highest ambition to mould his own character.

When Jeremiah Evarts died, it was a common remark among the churches and even among ungodly men, "If we all do as well as he did, we shall do about right!" Well for this dark world that such a luminary ever arose!

Doubtless we should be better Christians, and better qualified for our great mission if we more nearly resembled Evarts, or Bunyan, or Howard, or Brainard, or Dr. Scudder. But we should not then be as good as we might be, or as we ought to be. None of these men, or any others, are to be taken as our model.

An artist, ambitious to excel, seeks for no common daubs, but seizes upon the best models of the old painters. If you wish to build a boat, or a house, or create a statue, you look about for as perfect a model as you can find. If, then, you are about to form a character that shall live when the stanchest ship which ever rode the waves shall lie worm-eaten in the dock; that shall stand, when the strongest foundations shall give way; that shall endure when every statue shall have crumbled beneath the touch of time; and when even the world shall have passed away, you must not be content with an imperfect model. A perfect one is presented to us in the Bible, — not obscure and undefined, but distinct as life, with every limb and lineament so strongly

marked, that we have the model Christian directly before us.

The first thing that strikes us in beholding the New Testament model, is, that he is a *renewed man*. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." This is the first grand feature, the very substratum of his character. It is the rock on which the spiritual edifice is built. Without this there is absolutely nothing on which to predicate Christian character. You may foolishly try to erect your house, but it is built upon the sand. An unconverted man, ever so well trained, ever so moral and amiable, cannot develop a model New Testament character.

But the Christian modelled after the New Testament pattern, is not merely or mainly a theoretical one; he is eminently a *practical* Christian. "The finest theory never yet carried any man to heaven." Religion is something more than "notions," "opinions," or "articles of belief." It is a principle of spiritual life that fills the soul and regulates the conduct.

The grand truths of revelation relating to the atonement of Christ and the redemption of the human soul, are of but little moment unless they have a practical bearing on human life.

That Christian, therefore, who combines in his character and life the truest theory and purest practice, approximates the most nearly to the New Testament model. In other words, there will appear in his character, a profound harmony between faith and works,—faith the ground of pardon; good works the evidence of it. The one the offspring and

exponent of the other; always together; working inwardly and outwardly. And no Christian character approximates the New Testament model, in which this harmony is not preserved.

In a word, no man can successfully engage in the Christian's great work of practical evangelism, without a *well-balanced character*. He must be armed at all points, and develop all his strength. He will have need of it all.

With an emphasis which ought to startle us in these days of supineness, Jesus once exclaimed, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." "So shall ye be my disciples." The assurance is not that the Father will be glorified if we bear little fruit; it reads, "that ye bear **MUCH** fruit!" That is, every physical, mental, and spiritual power of the Christian must be developed, and directly employed in zealous labors to extend the Redeemer's kingdom and save souls. Let no man dare to be content with his evidence of discipleship, unless he is bearing *much fruit*. Oh! how dreadful will be the sentence upon some of us, who continue unmindful of the words of Jesus: "Henceforth let no fruit grow on thee forever!"

"Who went about doing good," is Peter's testimony of Christ.

How sublime is the life devoted entirely to "doing good to all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith." And no life is modelled after the New Testament pattern that is not marked in this particular — a life devoted to doing good. This must be true of every Christian's life in whatsoever

sphere God may have placed him. There is no negative Christian character.

There is no one question which a ransomed child of God should oftener ask himself, than "What can I do — what more can I do for my Redeemer, in establishing his kingdom?" I dare not be idle when

" A charge to keep I have,  
A God to glorify."

What! do we hear some indolent child of God exclaim, "I have nothing to do!" Nothing to do! when the whole world is lying in wickedness; when millions are perishing for the bread of life; when despotism and oppression are abroad; when the earth is filled with violence and blood; when the church of God has not put on her strength, and when the laborers go not forth into the great harvest already white for the reapers! Nothing to do! when the man of sin and the false prophet are gathering their armies for the last battle; when the onset is already sounding, and the champions of truth and error are meeting, with the shock of an earthquake, and lances are shivering to the gauntlet! Nothing to do! when infidelity and unrighteousness, Sabbath-breaking and intemperance and profanity and oppression breathe their pestilential breath over all that is pure and holy, leaving mildew and famine in their train; and when upon these waves of death the young men, the hope of our land, are swept from our sight forever! Nothing to do! when your own children — children of prayer, of the covenant — waxing bold in sin, join arms with the foes of God in

an unholy crusade against the doctrine of the cross ; when Satan and all hell are leagued to stop you in your journey to Mount Zion, and even now are raining darts upon your shield !

Fuller once said, " He need not complain of too little work who had a little world in himself to mend." It will keep some of us intensely busy till we die to be found ready and waiting for the appointed time.

The New Testament model is one marked by *intense devotion* and *untiring energy*. Such is the spirit breathing through all the New Testament, and it utterly repudiates the feeble and sickly character of the present age. Hear its language ! " Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business ? " " God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." " Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended ; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press forward to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

A complete Christian, modelled after the New Testament pattern, is one who in the sphere appointed him, discharges his whole duty in the fear of God ; who silently bears his cross and watches unto prayer ; who at all times, and on all occasions, hears the voice of God and obeys ; who uninfluenced by personal ease or the temptations of the world, or the fear of man, boldly discharges his duty, holding himself personally accountable to no one but Almighty God.

The true Christian man has a life to live, not

merely to enjoy. Without drawing back, or halting between duty and inclination, for with him inclination and duty go hand in hand; he steadily carries out the grand aim of his life. The time past of his life has sufficed him for spiritual bondage and impulsive manifestations; he is now, with all his heart, on the side of the Lord. It is no half-way service to him. His body, intellect, and heart are there. His influence, his property, his time, his fame, and his friends, he consecrates, deliberately and with a glad heart upon the altar of God. And when that is done once, it is done forever. The cost has been counted, the decision made. With an intelligent choice, with all the consequences before him, in time and eternity he has taken God for his portion. He is fixed. His business is to serve God.

It is a character in which there is a high and abiding sense of *Individuality*. No disciple in New Testament times was lost in the crowd. He felt that he formed an integral part of the church,—that he was a living member of a living body. Each one stands forward in his own person, and is often mentioned by name, and the good he did specified. Paul thanks Christians by name; calls them his fellow laborers, and when they died, and the Christian band wept over their graves, they could point to this and that good work which they had done.

Each Christian felt that he was one of the “called,” and that he was “commissioned.” He had no idea of shrinking from his duty, nor of measuring his benevolence by that of another. He felt that he himself had a work to do, and that he must in his own person give account to God in the great day.



This high sense of individuality is absolutely essential to the character of a Bible Christian.

The character of the true Bible Christian is also distinguished by a high and holy sense of *submission* to the Divine will in all things. He is the Lord's to be used just as God pleases, and just where he pleases.

Chrysostom, once the bishop of Constantinople, and afterwards driven into exile, persecuted and despised, died away from all the splendors of the capitol, and all the comforts and honors which he had enjoyed, uttering his favorite motto *δοξα τῷ Θεῷ πάντων ἕνεκεν*, "Glory to God for all things."

Such a character was modelled after the New Testament pattern. "Rejoice evermore!" "In every thing give thanks!" Be not only resigned and submissive, but cheerful and thankful. Give God glory in all things, and for all things. In all circumstances and trials, in all joys and sorrows be thankful! For the sunshine, for the clouds; for the approbation of men, and for their wrath and persecution, give God thanks! Thank him for the rod, and the furnace, and the tempest; for if you are his child, it is a proof of his love and of his purpose to purify and polish you for a glorious setting in his crown.

Such a man will lose himself in Christ.\* He will

\* By this, nothing is meant that shall be construed as at all inconsistent with the principle just laid down. The idea that a genuine child of God, called to the vineyard to *work*, and with a sanctified will and holy zeal, rousing up all the powers of the individual man to do his Father's will — is after all, a mere machine, passive in the Divine hand, simply to be acted upon, rather than to act with

live in him, for him, and with him; will feel that he absolutely belongs to him; is a part of him. He will cheerfully give up any thing and every thing that may hinder the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth. He will "cut off a right hand or pluck out a right eye," if it stand one iota in the way of his usefulness. He will "become all things to all men that he may win some."

But superadded to all this and consistent with it, no Christian man can arrive at the fulness of the Gospel stature, without corresponding *earnestness*. He is ransomed and pardoned. He stands on the Rock, with the new song of "the great multitude that no man can number." He must be humble, but he must be enthusiastic also. He must be intensely awake; with all the susceptibilities of his renewed nature aroused for the lost.

Let such enthusiasm burn in the heart of one pastor, and of one church. Let them all speak the truth in warning sinners. Let them from the fulness of their souls address their fellow men, and God only can tell the result. Moral emotion is like all other emotion, contagious, and such a flame of Christian zeal and love in one church, will extend its light and heat to surrounding churches.

Such sanctified zeal in promoting the cause of Christ is demanded in order to the full development of the Christian man; demanded by the grand doctrines of which his life is to be the best exponent. By the condition of the sinner and the state of the

an intense personal energy, is altogether visionary, and unscriptural. And yet there is a most vital sense in which the New Testament model includes a *self-renouncing* character.

human mind in view of the truth; by the terrible earnestness of the sinner's great adversary; by all the motives of the Gospel; by all the facts of probation; by the powers of the world to come; by the love of Christ; by the condemnation of the law; by death; by heaven and hell;—by all these, he is to be in earnest.

We have already intimated that there have been many excellent models in New Testament and apostolic times, and in modern days; and we should be far holier, happier, and useful Christians, if we imitated them more closely. If we had the boldness and firmness of Peter, the love and sweetness of John, the open-hearted candor of Nathaniel, the martyr devotion of Stephen, the intense missionary zeal of Paul, the every-day practical religion of Dorcas, the intense Christian affection of the disciples who laid down their necks for Paul, the moral courage of Luther, the self-abasement of Brainerd, the holy freedom and active spiritual joy of Payson, the spirit of practical evangelism, the every-day ardor of winning souls to Christ which has rendered the name of Harlan Page immortal, the inner life and contemplative piety of Mrs. Edwards, the devoted self-denial of Harriet Newell,—if we resembled all or any of these, well indeed would it be for the church.

But no one of these presents to us a perfect model, in which appear all the characteristics we have been feebly delineating. In the life of CHRIST, alone, we have that model. Here it is all clear and luminous. Here is the great Sun; the rest are revolving satellites. Brilliant they may be, but only through light borrowed from this sun.

It was said of Ignatius, "that he carried about Christ, with him in his heart." Bishop Cranmer on one occasion greatly desired the preferment of a young clergyman, and gave as his reason this testimony of his character, "*Nihil appetit, nihil ardet, nihil somniat, nisi Jesum Christum.*" He seeks nothing, desires nothing, dreams of nothing but Jesus Christ.

What an example is that of Christ! In the aim of his life, how noble, — in the rule of his conduct, how pure and uncompromising, — in his condition of life, how contented, — as a friend, how true and sincere, — in his sorrows, how patient, — in his joys, how calm and serene, — in his consecration to his work, how entire and constant, — in his interest for souls, how tender and faithful, — in his teaching, how earnest, — in his spirit of prayer, how importunate, — in his spirit of forgiveness, how God-like!

Brethren in Christ! here is our model. There is no other. Let us hold it up before us; and while we wonder and admire and adore, with holy reverence, let us aim, with firm trust in God, to be like him; and pray for that time when "we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," shall be "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord."

If such Christians were common, what a transformation would there be in individual lives! What "lowliness, and meekness, and longsuffering, and forbearing one another, and preferring one another in love," would there be! What efforts "to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace;" what brotherly kindness, what charity, and faith, and hope, and knowledge, and steadfastness, and zeal; what

Christian heroism and prayer; what heavenly-mindedness; what activity in benevolence; what meditation; what freedom from the dominion of sin; what light; what joy; what a complete putting off of the old man; what a complete putting on of the new man.

How different will such a man look and talk and act. How decided he is; how truthful; how earnest; how meek before God; how bold before men; what an intense energy breathes in every action he puts forth; what a moral power he wields! With him, faith is faith, and life is life. He does not exist merely, he *lives* — lives fast; he crowds more of the good deeds which spring from love into one year, than other men do in a dozen. With him all the doctrines and all the duties of the Bible, and all the graces, and all the rewards of the Christian are realities. He knows that sin exists, and that there is a Saviour. The apostasy and the recovery to him are not abstract truths in theology, but facts which nerve him for action. To him the new birth and the renewed life; the sanctified heart and the vital union of the living body with the living head, are truths of intense meaning. To him the conflict of the Christian soldier is not romance, nor his reward ideal. He feels that he is growing up from childhood to full manhood. He knows that he is pressing on to the summit of the mount. His doubts and fears are therefore removed, and his hope is indeed "an anchor of his soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil."

The *church* needs such Christians. Her completeness depends on the perfection of individual char-

acter. The glory of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, when she shall arise and shine, and when the king shall make her ready in royal apparel for the wedding, depends upon the completeness and purity of each individual saint, who will "come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

If you would stop the mouths of gainsayers, arrest the infidel's sneer, and thus wipe away the reproach from Zion; if you would see her arise from the dust and put on her crown, and take the sceptre and "look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners," — then you must be a Bible Christian.

The *world* needs such Christians — "men of God thoroughly furnished for every good work, that they may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God; growing up into the stature of the fulness of Christ Jesus" In this world of imperfection, of monstrous developments, of inconsistencies, how refreshing to see such a character. Would to God we had many such Christians. How would the angel fly through the midst of heaven, and that age of Millennial activity and holy obedience, and rejoicing be hastened, "when a nation should be born in a day." How would the face of society be changed; how soon would justice and equity fill the earth. Peace would prevail; and the nations would learn war no more. Then would be realized the picture of the author of the "Course of Time" —

"The prisonhouse, where chained felons pined,  
Threw open his ponderous doors, let in the light  
Of heaven, and grew into a Church, where God

Was worshipped. None were ignorant, selfish none.  
 Love took the place of law; where'er you met  
 A man, you met a friend, sincere and true.  
 Kind looks foretold as kind a heart within;  
 Words as they sounded, meant; and promises  
 Were made to be performed. Thrice happy days!  
 Philosophy was sanctified, and saw  
 Perfections that she thought a fable, long.  
 Revenge his dagger dropped, and kissed the hand  
 Of Mercy; Anger cleared his cloudy brow,  
 And sat with Peace; Envy grew red and smiled  
 On Worth; Pride stooped, and kissed Humility;  
 Lust washed his miry hands, and, wedded, leaned  
 On chaste Desire; and Falsehood laid aside  
 His many folded cloak, and bowed to Truth;  
 And Treachery up from his mining came,  
 And walked above the ground with righteous Faith;  
 And Covetousness unclinch'd his sinewy hand,  
 And opened his door to Charity, the fair;  
 Hatred was lost in Love; and Vanity,  
 With a good conscience pleased, her feathers cropp'd;  
 Sloth in the morning rose with Industry;  
 To Wisdom Folly turned; and Fashion turned  
 Deception off, in act as good as word.  
 The hand that held a whip was lifted up  
 To bless; Slave was a word in ancient books  
 Met, only; Every man was free; and all  
 Feared God, and served him day and night in love."

*Pollok, Book 5.*

Such, briefly, as we conceive it, is the New Testament model of Christian character and life. The only one which it is safe for the church of God to follow. My brother in Christ! suffer me to inquire, is such a character yours? It ought to be. You are a member of that church which the Saviour intended to "redeem from all iniquity," that church through whose holy example under God this guilty

world is to be evangelized. You are a pardoned, ransomed sinner; you are an heir of glory, and you ought to have such a character. And will you bear with me while I add, if you would be happy and useful, if you would share in the labor and rewards of the great work of restoring the lost, you *must* have such a character.

My brother, kneel with me at the altar of God, and together let us offer this one petition:—Blessed Saviour! let thy perfect example be mine; let the Bible standard of religion be mine; let the New Testament model of Christian character be mine. Oh! grant that I may copy that example, reach that standard, and attain that model, and thine shall be the glory evermore. Amen!



## CHAPTER IV.

### FAITH.

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“NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN.”

“THESE ALL DIED IN FAITH, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE PROMISES, BUT HAVING SEEN THEM AFAR OFF, AND WERE PERSUADED OF THEM, AND EMBRACED THEM, AND CONFESSED THAT THEY WERE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH.” — Heb. 11 : 1 and 13.

A CHURCH-MEMBER once said to his pastor, “Why is my faith of so little comfort to me, so often obscured with clouds — of so little use as a guide to others — and of so little power in the great work of Evangelism?”

“My dear brother,” replied the pastor, “one reason is because your views of faith are rather *theoretical* than *practical*, rather metaphysical than simply scriptural, — your faith is rather an article of your creed, than an essential element of your life.

“Another reason is, you are influenced by sense : the present world is near, the future far off. Your faith does not make the powers of the world to come living realities ; you do not live as one who passed every day as though ‘the next hour the judgment

trumpet was to sound.' Your faith is not 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'

"In a word, your faith does not actually overcome the world—subordinating things earthly to things heavenly—rising high up to the throne—actually eclipsing the things of time and sense; and your trust in God is not an absorbing interest in the Redeemer's kingdom—enabling you to 'count all things but loss that you may win Christ.'"

We propose, then, *to define and illustrate that faith—so essential as an element of Christian character in the great work of practical evangelism.*

We shall do it principally by reference to the faith of those immortal worthies whose names and deeds God has perpetuated by the pen of inspiration.

It is a mournful fact that the Christian church has departed so far from the ground of simple patriarchal and apostolic faith,—that it is so seldom now an energizing principle, lifting its possessor above the dust and strife and clouds of earth, to realize the fruition of his faith. A faith so universal in the days of Bible heroes, when Daniel was cast to the lions' den, and the three children into the furnace, is so seldom witnessed now—that we are tempted to repeat the significant question of Jesus, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find FAITH on the earth?"

One great difficulty in defining faith arises from the "poverty of language." We have no one word embodying all the Bible would include in those exercises of the mind and heart denominated, *faith*. We may call it belief, or desire, or trust, or dependence, or submission, or obedience—yet our defini-

tion is deficient, inasmuch as faith includes all these. We may adopt the imposing language of the schoolmen and define faith to be the "subjective appropriation of the objective work of Christ;" but what meaning of practical importance has such a definition to the great body of simple-hearted Christians?

Again, we may adopt another common definition, that faith is an *influencing belief*, including not only a full assent of the understanding based upon proper evidence, but such a cordial reception of the truth in the heart that it regulates the life. It certainly implies an entire consecration of the believer's whole being to the service of God. Some one, I believe it is Edwards, has well said of saving faith, it includes "the whole soul entirely believing, cordially embracing, and humbly and joyfully depending upon the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Saviour."

But after all there cannot, I apprehend, be found a more complete and satisfactory definition of faith than that given by the apostle in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. And all other definitions whether metaphysical or practical, are felt to be right or wrong as they coincide with this or differ from it.

"*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" This is short, clear, and comprehensive. And it is the only place where any formal definition of faith is attempted in the New Testament.

What are the "things hoped for" and "things not seen?" For these expressions are synonymous, the latter part of the sentence being mainly a repetition of the first — giving it intensity. Now what are the

“things hoped for and unseen,” of which FAITH is both the substance and the evidence? They are unquestionably God, and his favor; Christ, the spread of his kingdom and his mediatorial glory; heaven and its inhabitants, employments, and enjoyments. All these are unseen by mortal eye, but are “hoped for” and longed after with an intense desire. According to the apostle, though you are in the flesh still you walk by faith, and *your faith is to you a perfect demonstration* that the world for which you hope is not unreal and shadowy, but real and substantial; you know that it is so, you *feel* that it is so.

When they stoned STEPHEN, calling on the name of the Lord Jesus, this first Christian martyr little heeded the stones crushing his body out of the semblance of humanity, so real was his vision of the opening heaven and the Son of Man at the right hand of power. CRANMER held his right hand in the flame until it shrivelled away, and the physical pain was swallowed up in the exceeding glory just before him. So PAUL endured perils by land and by sea, and among false brethren; was subjected to cold, hunger, nakedness, and sword, until with emphasis he could say, “for thy sake we are killed all the day long.” Yet by the power of *faith* these things were all subordinated; for really to the man of strong faith there are no trials, no crosses, no sorrows, for heaven is at hand, and he “endures as seeing him who is invisible.”

“Men in general look at sensible objects. The things which are seen limit the sphere of their observation. But faith shifts the scene. As to the most momentous objects it puts us in a new world.

The believer looks not at the things which are seen, which are temporal; but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal. He fixes the eye of his mind upon them. In the high spiritual sense, he *sees* them. They stand before him as realities."

Faith, then, is something more than a theory. It is a *principle* of action, the energizing element in spiritual life, which purifies and ennobles, until the temporal is lost in the eternal, and he lives, and acts, and sings, and prays, and works, — as if heaven were already opened to him.

In the lives of the illustrious dead — of Bible memory — of those memorable in the history of the church in all ages, we have examples of the power of faith as a *conquering principle*. And from which it will appear how simple and how grand a thing is faith; that it is simply "taking God at his word." Every example of the wonderful faith here recorded, illustrates the idea of *simple, unwavering trust in the word of God*.

What else had NOAH on which to build his faith; what else was his faith but a full conviction that every word which God had spoken would come to pass? Such a conviction led to entire confidence; nay, it was a perfect demonstration that the event would take place which had been threatened, — nay, such a faith was so clearly the evidence of things not seen, that he anticipated the one hundred and twenty years probation, and lived all the while as if the time was at hand. What an energizing, all-conquering principle that must have been, which, without once faltering could have sustained him so long. It led him simply to trust God, for there was

nothing else to keep alive his faith. There was nothing in reason or analogy on which he could fall back as a sort of bulwark or strengthener of his faith. "No similar event ever had occurred," and there were no premonitions in the heaven above or in the earth beneath, nothing in philosophy or chemistry which would lead him to expect such a calamity in the natural order of things. All he had to rely on was the *simple, naked word of God*.

God had said that he would destroy the world with a flood of waters, and he simply and fully believed him,—so fully that he had no more doubt of it than if he already heard the rattling thunder, or saw the opening of the windows of heaven. His faith outlived time. It was too strong for the cavilings of philosophy,—it was not to be influenced by "wit, raillery, or sarcasm." He simply believed God and obeyed him.

In the great work of PRACTICAL EVANGELISM, it is all important to revive and perpetuate the faith of this patriarch.

The things which try our faith are manifest, namely,—the *time* that must elapse before the universal spread of the Gospel. How many centuries have rolled by, and Infinite Wisdom alone can tell how many more may elapse!

The *gigantic nature also of the work*. The evangelization of *one* nation, what a work! How far removed from the millennial standard of holiness is the most Christian nation on earth!

Look, too, at the hostile array which Gog and Magog are marshalling against the army of Christ.

See the gigantic opposition to be encountered in individuals, societies, and nations, with regard to laws, literature, manners, and customs. Who can calculate the difficulties in the way of the conversion of one single sinner? How long has a praying mother to wait for the salvation of an erring son, until "hope deferred maketh the heart sick?" How long had that noble band of missionaries in the Sandwich Islands to wait, after "sowing in tears," until they were permitted to "reap in joy?" Ah! with an emotion which only a man of faith can feel, the church shall sing, —

" Let those who sow in sadness wait  
Till the fair harvest come ;  
They shall confess their sheaves are great,  
And shout the blessings home !"

No matter, then, how gloomy and forbidding may be the prospect, nor how slowly the light may break in, nor in how many organizations the enemies of religion may combine to oppose the truth, — no matter! The word which we believe hath told us, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision!" Our faith is to us "the substance of things hoped for," and in spite of opposition, of ridicule, of wrath, we can and will still shout, "Great is truth, and will prevail."

Our God has assured us that he will "give the heathen to his Son for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession," and we take him at his word. We shall work on and pray on through all darkness and all storms, "sowing beside all waters," and having no more doubt of the

issue than if we already heard the millennial anthem swelling out on every breeze, "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ."

I never rise from the perusal of the history of those old Bible heroes, without being overwhelmed with admiration of their character, and humbled in view of my own limited attainments.

In the history of ABRAHAM there are two impressive illustrations of the power of faith. One when he obeyed God in going out from his country into a strange land, four hundred miles through an inhospitable desert. The other, when he was commanded to offer up his son. In this latter trial especially, we see the nature and strength of his faith. In the thing which he did, we have one of the clearest illustrations of faith in the Bible — that kind of faith to which the eye of the church must be directed in the great work of "going into all the world to preach the Gospel to every creature."

In his old age, after he had waited long for the fulfilment of the promise concerning Isaac, when his heart was beginning to cling to "the lad," when he began to feel that the wonderful prophecy concerning his posterity was to be fulfilled, — God suddenly says, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

Now considering the time and the circumstances, and the nature of the command itself, we can conceive of no event better calculated to try most effectually his faith in God. He was positively en-



joined to take his son of promise — the future head of a great nation, his only son, whom he loved, and deliberately offer him up for a burnt offering! Let us imagine the case were ours. With the same amount of faith in God we now have, how would we have acted? How eagerly we would have looked about for objections or reasons for delay. How many Abraham might have raised:—“What, offer up my son, my only son? Has it not been said, in Isaac shall thy seed be called? Surely I have mistaken the voice of God.” No! Abraham does not hesitate. He had often heard God’s voice; he knew it now, and he determined with a simple trust in God, which challenges our admiration, and invites our imitation, to obey,—accounting that as his duty was to obey, God would fulfil his part of the promise, and, if need be, he “could raise him from the dead.”

This was FAITH, — an *all-conquering* principle, — overcoming natural affections, subduing rebellious thoughts, inducing sweet submission to the will of God, anchoring down with eternal confidence on the truth that the Creator will do all things right, — enabling the Christian to do his duty, though the fondest ties are riven, and the fairest prospects blasted.

Verily! this, and this only is the kind of faith by which spiritual heroes are made, — the faith which is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,” — the faith with which every child of God must be endowed, who would have any substantial part in the great work of practical evangelism.

Such a faith will enable the church to go forward, though Champion and Campbell and Lowry and Williams fall on the battle field, just when by the providence of God they are prepared to work.

In the example of MOSES, we find one of the most remarkable triumphs of faith on record. Surely no one could have had less *sight* to walk by! What could have induced him to give up the treasures of Egypt, and cast in his lot with a nation of slaves? There was no earthly reason to hope that, trodden down and ground under the heel of their oppressors, the Hebrew nation ever would be free — a great, happy, and renowned people, before whom the heathen nations should flee. Nothing, surely, on which all this was to rest, but the simple word of God, — and because God had said it, it was to Moses as if it had really transpired. He took God at his word, — “He chose afflictions with the people of God.” “He had respect to the recompense of the reward.” He went on, consecrated to this work, and “endured as seeing him who is invisible,” — as if the eye of God was ever on him, and the voice of God ever uttering the promise in his ear.

The fact that God had said he would bring his people, the descendants of Abraham, to inhabit the land promised their fathers, was to Moses DEMONSTRATION absolute that it would be done. Such was the faith which was in him an abiding, all-conquering principle — actually subordinating things earthly to those which are heavenly!

See how in each and all of these examples, faith was to them “the substance of things hoped for,

the evidence of things not seen," — the demonstration of the thing itself.

The history of the flood, after the event, did not more certainly fix it in the mind of Noah, than did faith, based on the simple word of God, one hundred and twenty years before.

When Abraham arose at the command of God, to leave his kindred and go into an unknown land, he was just as sure of it for an inheritance to his posterity, as if he had stood on some eminence, nine hundred years afterward, and gazed upon the splendid realm of Solomon.

When at the age of forty, Moses voluntarily abandoned the luxuries of the court of the Pharaohs, for self-denying and noble identity with the people of God, he had no more doubt that he was the appointed and successful leader of that band, and that they would be brought to the land which God gave to Abraham, than he had on the top of Pisgah.

In all these examples, faith was to them as the voice of God, — the *demonstration* of the event. There was no doubt in their minds, not the shadow of one, that God would do all he had said. It was the simple triumph of the *principle of faith*.

All this their faith led them to endure. Their trust in God was so firm that it could not be shaken. They "had respect unto the recompense of the reward." They "looked forward to a city which had foundations." They were enabled by their faith to rise above the world, and the things of earth were altogether subordinated to the things of heaven.

In these degenerate days,—these days of feebleness and despondency, of doubt and fear,—these days of manikins, this faith of the old Bible heroes needs to be revived to secure *entire consecration* in the practical work of winning souls to Christ. The disciples once said, “Lord, we have left all and followed thee.” And once again, when at the call of friendship and humanity, he ventured into the presence of his enemies who were thirsting for his blood, the voice of his disciples was, “Let us also go that we may die with him!” It is only under the all subordinating power of such faith, that the child of God, in the great work of practical evangelism, will shrink from no sacrifice. Such a faith had JOHN MILTON CAMPBELL, a personal friend of the writer of this essay. With him, the salvation of souls and the conversion of this world to God was a passion; and it became so through the power of his faith. From the moment when, arrested in the field where he was ploughing, by a stray leaf which some one of God’s angels had dropped in the furrow, until he was borne away from the shore of Africa, up to the city of his God,—he never lost sight of his work. Such a passion for saving the lost upspringing from his all-conquering faith, made his short career sublime. It rose superior to natural diffidence; it annihilated gigantic obstacles in his way; it ushered him into the Gospel ministry; it sent him like an admonitory angel through the churches to enkindle a corresponding love for the dying; and it finally gave him the victory over the bitter disappointment of an early death.

“*The guard dies — it never surrenders!*” was the X

noble reply of one of Napoleon's generals — a reply which has rendered the body-guard of the emperor immortal. It is such an instance of devotion which, at times, makes physical bravery almost sublime. Such a death upon the field of battle, whether in righteous defence of freedom, or in despotic invasion of foreign territory, has been rendered immortal in story and in song. There is something attractive in a soldier's death, — in the pomp of military parade, — the enthusiasm of martial music and banners waving, and the rising sun flashing from the points of a hundred thousand bayonets — in the shaking tread of embattled legions — the furious charge — the roar of cannon and musketry — that makes the soldier lose sight of principle, and gives him as stout an arm and as bold a heart in a bad as in a just cause. And he will die as willingly in defending the wrong as the right. Yes, the soldier may die when in the headlong charge of infuriated men, his enthusiasm is kindled to madness. He may die, when for country and fame, and when if he fall, it is with loved companions in arms — a weeping nation bending over his grave, and his name perpetuated on monumental marble.

But in the death of such a man of faith as CAMPBELL, I read a sublimer lesson. It was the remark of an eminent American statesman, that "men must die, and circumstances change, but principles were immortal." The man who shrinks from no self-denial, danger, or death, from principle — is the man who dies nobly; who, rather than turn aside from the great work to which God has called him, will die young, die upon heathen ground, die alone. Ah, my

brother! swift was thy course, and short thy work, but thy mission was not in vain, and from the wings of thine all-conquering faith, have fallen into the bosom of the church precious seeds, that will spring up and bear a glorious harvest for the judgment-day.

This faith of the old heroes of Bible memory must be revived, if we would perpetuate the spirit of *effectual prayer*. Faith and prayer are indissoluble, — the tree and the fruit. What power and holy daring are in these words! What a watchword for the Redeemer's church in all time to come! Upon the Waldensian banner, which three hundred years ago was crimsoned with the blood of those firm protesters against the corruptions of the papal Antichrist, and which now waves its broad folds over their fifteen peaceful and flourishing parishes in the valleys of France, was written, "*Lux lucet in tenebris,*" *A light shineth in the darkness,* was a motto which for its appropriate and scriptural beauty has challenged the admiration of the world. There, in that secluded spot — away down in the rugged defiles of the valleys of Piedmont, in the centre of a darkness the most profound, has that motto been the rallying watchword. And the heroic defender of a pure Protestant Christianity, with joy kindling in his eye, and Jesus enthroned in his heart, has placed his hand upon the brow of his stripling boy, and pointing to the flag waving over them, exclaimed, "*Lux lucet in tenebris!*"

But in the work of practical evangelism, the noble mission of winning souls to Christ, another watchword is ours, — FAITH AND PRAYER. Faith unflinching, and prayer "without ceasing," — faith

which reaches its hand behind the clouds and takes hold upon the throne, and prayer with its intense energy, uplifting a worm and giving him power with God.

Who can refuse a hearty amen to the prayer, — “Almighty Saviour! in the church-militant, augment the power of faith and prayer.” If such unfaltering faith in God were common, the church would be almost omnipotent for good. Then would shine the light of the uncorrupted word, the light of a purified church, the light of the Divine presence, and the nations of the earth would walk in that light. Then the pilgrim would no longer toil on through the darkness and cry, “Watchman, what of the night?” for there would be no night. Then the temple shattered and blasted by sin, would be rebuilt in symmetry and glory, and the light of God’s face would play upon its summit. “Then the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold.” Then over all this darkened world of ours shall the light stream, and Golgotha become a vast Beulah, and the angels of God shall wing their way and answer back the chorus of the redeemed, “Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of God and the power of his Christ.” “Even so come, Lord Jesus.”

## CHAPTER V.

### SELF-DENIAL REQUIRED BY CHRIST, AS ESSENTIAL TO DISCIPLESHIP.

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“IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY AND FOLLOW ME.” — Luke 9: 23.

THERE is no one doctrine and duty more important in the great work of Practical Evangelism, than that of self-denial. The work of redemption demanded the greatest act of self-denial the universe ever saw. It was promoted through the patriarchal age, and the era of the prophets, and through apostolic times, by great self-denial, — and by self-denial is the work to be completed. As the great Master “pleased not himself” but laid aside “the glory which he had with the Father before the world was” and endured for our sakes, the “reproaches of them that reproached,” so every one who would be a follower of Christ and a co-worker with him must understand and practise the same spirit. This duty of self-denial is expressed in the most forcible language in the following passages — the exact and proper import of which it is our purpose to explain and enforce. “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not



worthy of me, he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple."

These passages are thrown together because they are alike in their language and import, and by their repetition show the impression which the great teacher wished to make on the disciples' minds. I almost dread to look at them, to let their full meaning come out, and to draw the tremendous inference which they suggest. The expressions are certainly clear. God grant that they may be engraven in characters of fire on every Christian heart—for until their exact import is fully felt by the Christian church, the wheels of evangelism will drag heavily.

The statement of this doctrine by the Saviour is certainly as emphatic as it well can be. The self-denial here taught is not theoretical but practical. It is not the poetry of self-denial. Nor again, is it a problematical duty announced, but it appears in the life—it underlies Christian character, it is absolutely essential to discipleship. "If any man would come after me let him—that is, he *must*—deny himself and follow me." This is the statement of a generic truth, peculiarly applicable to the apostolic church,

but addressed to all Christians in all time; for though the form of self-denial may change, the principle is the same. And the inference here unquestionably is, that no Christian can be placed under such circumstances that it will not be both his duty and privilege to "deny himself and take up his cross daily."

With different Christians in different conditions, and under dissimilar circumstances, the form of self-denial may change. The poor and rich, the obscure and great, fill different spheres, and each has his appropriate cross to bear.

The writer of this essay was once acquainted with an excellent Christian woman, one who professed to have the interests of souls at heart, who was troubled and in great bondage because she was tempted to furnish her house in as costly and extravagant a manner as her fashionable sister over the way. In the same city lived a poor widow who had to support and educate her children by her needle, and whose sensitive and motherly feelings were wounded, when she saw her daughters' cheeks redden with shame at the neglect of more fashionably dressed children. But she resisted the temptation, and as usual put her hardly earned mite into the Lord's treasury, not forgetful of that word, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

True self-denial, as we have seen, implies bearing the cross daily, from *principle*. It is not alone through the impulse kindled by some warm appeal, that you are suddenly to be aroused to the importance of denying yourself—something! but

you are to be always ready to make the sacrifice whenever demanded; you are to seek for opportunities to test the genuineness of your discipleship. "Let him follow me," said the Saviour. Jesus went about doing good, from principle, so must I. He endured hardship and privations, from principle, so must I. He denied himself, and bore his cross from principle, so must I. Nay, if there be within my heart that all-conquering faith which is at once the product and seal of Divine love, I shall hail with joy the privilege of bearing my cross daily, and following "Him through evil as well as good report."

Hence, the principle implies a SUPREME LOVE for Christ; a love so utterly consuming all other passions that no sacrifice is deemed too great to make. How emphatic is the Saviour's language, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, he cannot be my disciple." Of course the Saviour meant relatively, not really, that is, he should love them less. The expression is as strong a one as could be employed to designate the supremacy of the Christian's devotion to his God and Saviour, so complete that it swallows up every other.

During a seminary vacation the writer witnessed a striking illustration of the fact that such self-denial is not always mere sentiment. He was at the father's house of a young brother who had consecrated himself to the foreign missionary work. Together we had kneeled around the altar of prayer, and had retired to our room. When the

son with uncontrollable emotion bowed his head upon his hands, and cried, "Here are my aged parents, O God, how can I give them up and leave them alone, for a foreign field?" In a few moments he was heard to murmur, "Give them up! Lord Jesus, what didst thou not give up for me! He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me," and he looked up with a calm and smiling serenity peculiar to himself,—the struggle was over—he had obtained the victory.

In the lives of *Champion*, who with an ample fortune entered upon the missionary work, and supported himself mainly by donations to the board,—of *Dr. Scudder*, who abandoned an honorable and lucrative profession, for the same self-denying work,—of *Gordon Hall*, *Pliny Fisk*, *Mrs. H. Winslow*, *Mrs. Van Lennep*, *Dr. Grant*, and all that band of noble spirits; and especially in the lives and heroic example of the converts of our missionaries in India and the Turkish Empire, are to be found some of the finest specimens of Gospel self-denial upon record,—a self-denial springing from the intensity of their love.

While penning this paragraph, a devoted and self-denying home missionary on the banks of the *Wabash*, one whose scholarship would fit him for almost any position, stepped into the writer's study and with deep emotion remarked, "My children's education has been neglected till they are getting so old that I cannot neglect it any longer, and how they are to be educated I know not. I heard one ministering brother, whose salary is no better than mine, and he has only a wife and child, while I have

a large family, say, that he had sent his wife and child east to her parents, and he intended to 'leave them there *until he could see his way through.*' The truth is, with the present prices and support, we need a good deal of faith, of which we have very little. PRAY FOR US. Why do not the home missionaries need the prayer of God's people as well as the foreign? We have very few Aarons and Hurs, and for want of them we have become weak and faint."

The opening of the "Books" will alone reveal how many of such noble spirits under the motive power of this love have forsaken all that they have to preach Christ to the perishing. May God, in infinite mercy multiply them a thousand fold!

The scriptural idea of self-denial is developed in these clear and forcible statements of the Saviour, and when He has made true discipleship dependent on it, it is strange that the doctrine is so little understood and far less practised. It is, in short, nothing less than the full surrender of the whole physical, intellectual, and spiritual man to God. It is a perfect self-sacrifice upon the altar of evangelism. The disciple considers himself—not as his own, but the Lord's. He knows and rejoices in the fact that he is bought with a price. He feels in his inmost soul that there is nothing in his power to give which he would withhold—there is no cross which he would not bear. There is no idol he would not for Christ's sake cheerfully dethrone. On his body, mind, and heart he writes, "this is the Lord's,"—on his houses, lands, and possessions, "this is the Lord's." If I have any property, or influence, or honors, I hold

them only as God's steward. My time is his, my friends are his, every thing I have is his. I use it for Him, I give it up to Him. —

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

In view of the scriptural idea of self-denial will appear in their true light some practices in the church of God, of those in good standing, among our best Christians, who, according to this rule, if not thrown out of the pale of true discipleship, at least have lived far below the Gospel standard. The writer here would disavow any disposition to sit as judge upon the church of God, and dictate what they shall eat or drink or with what they shall be clothed. He erects no standard of his own, to which, with unscriptural dogmatism, he expects all others to conform. He acknowledges but one rule, unambiguously stated in these words, — “Whatsoever ye do, *do all* TO THE GLORY OF GOD.” With that word before him, he purposes to speak of certain facts as they exist, and leave it to the enlightened consciences of all Christians, in the fear of God, to draw their own inferences and make their own decision. The writer is aware of the difficulty of arriving at any considerable degree of accuracy in determining the amount of self-denial in the church. It is sometimes difficult to determine what the real ability of a church is. He feels the truth of a remark made by a brother, high in the confidence of the churches, whose work has been approved of God, and whose

heart promptly answers to the sentiment of this essay, — “It is not,” said he, “what a man owns, but also what a man owes, that must be taken into the account. Some persons very high on the tax list, are perhaps hardly solvent. Others who are low on the list, may own property out of the county, stocks in other States, etc., which do not appear on the tax list. Then again a person’s tax is not at all a test of his income, or of his personal ability to contribute.” Yet while it would be almost impossible to arrive at the particulars, developing the real ability of our churches — there can be no question but that there is great wealth in them, and that our benevolence is *not* commensurate with it.

X A few facts, selected almost at random from the writer’s diary, must suffice, — facts which he is at liberty to publish, being restricted, by the parties to whom they relate, to silence only with regard to names, places, and dates.

There is an elder in a Presbyterian church, who had a handsome income, and real estate to the amount of \$25,000, who permitted the Home Missionary Society to sustain his minister, to whose support he contributed \$15.

In one of the larger churches in a western State, a devoted and earnest agent of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions presented the claims of a dying world. A wealthy member, who had just made \$10,000 in a trade, gave him grudgingly a pittance so miserable the writer is ashamed to state it, while a poor widow in the same church, dependent upon a small school for her living, dropped into his hand a two and a half dollar

gold piece, with tears of joy, that she had something to give for the dying.

The writer was informed by a fellow-laborer in the great vineyard, that there was a member of his church, worth \$20,000, who had for years past contributed nothing to the support of the Gospel at home, and nothing to the support of foreign missions, save 25 cents, one year!

"I cannot really afford to give any more!" how often do we hear Christian ladies exclaim, whose personal jewelry amounts to from \$50 to \$100 and upwards, and who, on an average, do not contribute \$1 a year to evangelize the world. There are professedly Christian women to be found in all our churches, unwilling to deny themselves some trifling ornament, or article of apparel, when the great missionary boards of the day are turned away with the cold reply, "Charity begins at home!"

How many Christian young ladies pay \$7 for a Maltese collar, deck their bonnets with costly Marabout feathers, and sport Chinese carved pearl or ivory fans, while to the ambassador of God, pleading for starving millions, they reply, "I am too poor to give!" Oh! tell it not to those who have already "crossed the flood," that the enlightened Christian mothers in American churches are so ambitious that their daughters should eclipse in costly apparel, the daughters of other Christian mothers, that they cannot hear their toiling, self-denying sisters from India and Africa, and from the far West when they cry, in the name of Christ, "Send us means to prevent our schools from being disbanded."

How many Christian ladies there are, who spend



annually, more money upon green-house plants and flowers than the whole amount contributed by the church to which they belong, to the cause of missions.

There are young men in our churches, lawyers, merchants, clerks, and mechanics, who do but little, if any thing, for the gospel at home or abroad; who spend for cigars and pleasure-riding one half as much money as the whole amount contributed by the church to which they belong, to evangelize the world. Oh what a reckoning will there be in *that day*, for those who spend pounds upon their own lusts, and give the pence to God! With what dismay shall we look back from the bed of death, at the life of ease and self-indulgence which we have led. A world perishing, and we nothing to give! Professing to belong to that Saviour who has said, "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself;" claiming to be the children of that God who has said, "the silver and the gold are mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills!" and yet doling out into His treasury a pittance so contemptible. No wonder that Dr. Nevins in his "Practical Thoughts" used this sharp language, "In my opinion there is nothing which lays the church more open to infidel attacks and contempt, than its parsimony to the cause of Christ."

The writer once visited a Christian friend, who with some pride, and much apparent satisfaction, showed him his house and improvements. In both its exterior and interior arrangement, it was indeed a model mansion. And as he pointed to his costly mirrors, carpets, statuary and paintings, and singing birds and elegant conservatory and splendid turn-out,

all upon the most approved style of the world, he remarked, "Now this pleases me; I believe I have about all I want, and am comfortably fixed at last." The writer went away sad, and could not forbear exclaiming to himself, "Ah! my brother! you are a professed follower of Him who had 'not where to lay his head;' does this look as if you were accustomed to deny yourself, and take up your cross daily? If one half of this money had been put into the Lord's treasury, to supply with the bread of Life the perishing millions of Africa, would you not still be as 'comfortably fixed' as was your Lord and Master — have as much inward peace, die as calmly, and have as good a hope of receiving the final approbation of Him who said, 'He that loveth houses or lands more than me, is not worthy of me?'"

There is a prominent member of an evangelical church in an eastern city, who (the writer was informed) has spent quite \$100,000 upon his private residence. And one of his pleas for such extravagance is that he is *able* to do it. "He made his money; it belongs to him, and he has a right to use it as he pleases!" Now, according to this New Testament idea of self-denial, neither of these propositions is true. If he has acquired property, it is only because God has prospered the labor of his hands. What he has, does not belong to him, but to God, and he has no right to use it, but as God pleases.

Now, when the world is perishing for the bread of Life, it is almost superfluous to ask, "Is such a useless expenditure of money on the part of God's stewards for their own personal gratification, consistent

with the character of a cross-bearing, self-denying follower of Jesus?" Nay, for a professed Christian man is it honest? Is it not using the money which God lent him, in a different manner, and for a different purpose from that specified in the loan? Is it not deliberate embezzlement? It is not his; not a cent of it; it never did belong to him. He is only a steward, yet he deliberately and most lavishly squanders all but a miserable remnant upon himself, his family, his houses and lands, and even replies to God's messengers sent after his own money, to carry on his own work, "I have done giving?"

In making such a record, the writer is not unmindful of that word, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Yet as a faithful witness for God, he must testify of that which he has seen. These are facts, milder than many that might have been selected; written not to herald to the world the shame of the church of God, but to "show the house of Jacob their sins." These things are said in sorrow. But so long as churches "keep back part of the price," so long as their benevolence at home and abroad is by no means commensurate with their ability, so long as domestic and foreign missions languish through our parsimony, so long as ease and luxury and self-indulgence come in successful competition with the claims of the Redeemer's kingdom, such facts must be proclaimed, and must startle many of us with reference to the foundation on which we have built our hopes for eternity.

How many of these are among the number of those who "deny themselves and take up their cross daily? Deny themselves! what is there that they

see and crave which they do not obtain. "No matter," say they, "if I want it and am able to get it, I will have it." Deny themselves! not one thing! There is not an article of apparel, not a piece of household furniture, not a single sensual gratification which they will give up for Christ's sake, and for the world's salvation. Is this right? is this Christian? A life of benevolence! such a life is one of sheer selfishness—they live for themselves, toil for themselves, please themselves—the cause of Christ is not the one nearest their hearts. That principle of supreme love which is both the motive and the development of true Gospel self-denial, does not exist.

Could we with the eye of Omniscience go through the church, how many should we find who gave up a single luxury, curtailed a single expenditure, reduced a single establishment, abandoned a single comfort, or were ever willing to forego a single enjoyment for Christ's sake and the Gospel's? And this is our cross-bearing life—our self-denying life! when from our fulness the pittance we dole out, and from our indolence the toil we endure, absolutely costs us nothing! "*Wherefore* I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Can it be that the great body of American Christians practically ignore such words of the Great Teacher as these? "Freely ye have received, freely give." "He that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none." "Sell all that ye have and give alms."

"I have shown you all things how that so laboring, ye ought to support the weak, and to remember

the words of the Lord Jesus — how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

May it not be that one reason why the American church has not prospered more in her foreign missions, and has had no larger share of genuine revival influences, like the pentecostal season of outpouring, at home — is because we have not come up to the standard of Gospel self-denial. And at this very moment, with an emphasis never before equalled, perhaps, is God addressing us on this wise: — “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

Thank God, if there be now and then an approximation to the standard which our Lord has furnished. Says Mr. Coan, of the church at Hilo, “We cannot thrive without giving. I preach one sermon a month on that subject, on the Sabbath before the first Monday of the month. And we reap as well as sow. Our contributions for the last six months have averaged more than two hundred dollars a month. At our monthly concert in August, the collection was two hundred and forty dollars. Our people are poor, but giving enriches them. This is positively true not only in spiritual things but in temporal. The less they give, the poorer they grow, and the reverse. Whatever others may do, Hawaiians cannot afford to rob the Lord.”

Thank God, if there are some noble men in our churches to whom with truth this testimony from a pastor of one of our largest churches, may be

applied. "Several of our gentlemen *tithe* their income for the Lord. One of my elders, now in a very flourishing business, with every prospect of great wealth, has fixed his stake down at the most moderate competency—never means to be rich, and gives all beyond his expenses, which are not large, to the Lord. Some of my wealthiest people are most active in Sabbath schools and in bringing the Gospel to the poor; and in this way deny themselves. In the measure of their liberality and personal activity for Christ, there has been a decided advance within two years."

"Though," adds the same pastor, "if the Spirit of the Lord Jesus dwelt in us more richly, where we now give hundreds, we might give thousands."

The writer has a personal friend, a member of a weak church who has little or no income, in the most moderate circumstances, who by careful economy has managed to pay, the past year, fifty dollars for the support of his pastor, and fifty dollars more to the cause of missions.

What a noble testimony is that which Paul bears concerning the churches in Macedonia: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves; praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift." Does this cheerful, prompt, and abounding liberality, a liberality up to and even "beyond their power," resemble the grudging parsi-

mony which keeps God's missionaries on allowance? Does it seem as if they had been accustomed to say, "We have done giving?"

Surely the masses of Christians in these latter days are forgetting one cardinal principle in their religion, on this wise announced: "Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." It cannot be that Bible reading Christians utterly reject the great principle laid down that they are God's stewards, and that all they have and are, they hold in trust as his "subordinate agents."

Surely, they who do not "deny themselves," who are self-indulgent and covetous, have forgotten that there is such a passage as this in their Bible, "ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich;" and with such a glorious example of self-denial, they can still fold their arms and cry, "too many calls," and "I have done giving."

What a touching illustration of the nature of Gospel self-denial is furnished us by the evangelist, "And he looked up and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, of a truth I say unto you that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all; For all these of their abundance have cast in unto the offering of God; but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she hath." Those two little pieces of brass, equal in value to only two thirds of a cent, were more in proportion to her means than the mag-

nificent gifts of the rich, and of course more acceptable to God. It *cost* her something to give — it cost them nothing. *She* felt it — it was a great self-denial to her for she gave all she had to live on, and trusted God to take care of her. But *they* gave of their abundance and felt it not. And though their broad pieces fell clanking into the box and covered up the poor widow's gift from the eye of men, the eye of God was fixed on those two mites, and he smiled, and all heaven was brighter, for God and all the good love the cheerful, self-denying giver, — “For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.” “Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all.”

Let all those Christians who are so anxious to “lay up in store against a rainy day,” that they are afraid to give liberally and cheerfully, and trust God to provide for them, remember the poor widow and her two mites. Here we see that “it may be proper to give all our property to God, and to depend on his Providence for the supply of our daily wants.” If we are poor and it will cost us a great sacrifice to give, we are to make the sacrifice and give. If we are rich, we are to give so largely that it will still require a great sacrifice on our part. We are to give in both cases according to our means, and in both cases till we feel it.

But how few of the rich give until it becomes a self-denial, or a real cross! The names of princely Christian donors are emblazoned upon the records of benevolent societies who have merely given as a charity a little of their surplus revenue for which



they had no special use, and could spare without feeling it, and in the very act of giving often feel that they are throwing it away! While hard-working Christians who have toiled for their bread, and poor widows bring along their mites, the fruit of self-denial, baptized with tears and consecrated with prayer, and lay it on God's altar, and it is accepted, and they hear a voice, whispering, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Who of us, my brethren, are thus toiling for God? obtaining property, holding honors, and acquiring influence for God? Apostolic times have passed, but have self-denying Christians passed away with them? The martyr age is gone by—but is the martyr spirit fled with it? Have we no *Pauls* willing for the Gospel's sake to endure "perils by sea, and perils by land?" Have we no *Peters* to cry, "Lord, we have left all to follow thee!" Have we no churches ambitious with a holy emulation, to imitate the example of the Macedonian Christians, who in spite of their poverty and affliction, cheerfully forced into the apostle's hands a gift even beyond their ability? Have we no widows with their two mites? Have we no toiling, self-denying *Lydias* looking after God's poor? or are our Christian women too eager after gold watches, and ear-rings, and bracelets, and fashionable apparel, and conservatories, to hear the sobbing cry of God's little ones? Are our Christian men too absorbed in speculation, in joining house to house and land to land, to heed that word of Jesus, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature?"

O Mammon, Mammon, how long shall thy shrine be decked with Christian offerings, and the old and the young, the rich and the poor, unite in a holocaust on thy unholy altar! O Fashion and Ease and Self-indulgence, how long will ye weave your enchantments around the professed followers of Him who had not where to lay his head, and who said, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE MEANS OF ATTAINING A HIGHER STANDARD OF PIETY.

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“SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.”—John 5: 39.

“TAKE HEED HOW YE HEAR.”—Luke 8: 18.

“PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.”—1 Thess. 5: 17.

“NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.”—Zech. 4: 6.

“I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME.”—Phil. 4: 13.

OFTEN in the depths of personal meditation does the humbled disciple, amazed at the magnitude of the work to which he is called, and his unfitness for it, exclaim, “Shall I ever become a Bible Christian? A man strong in faith and hope? who even in cross-bearing is a follower of Christ,—whose self-denial, the fruit of supreme love, staggers at no sacrifice,—whose life is a living epistle,—whose ‘constant holiness,’ like that of McCheyne, shall ‘touch the conscience of many,’—who laboring with holy zeal to save the lost, can realize, with J. B. Taylor, ‘how much better it will be to find in heaven a band of converts sent thither through one’s instrumentality than to arrive alone,’—who is so absorbed in the

triumph of the church, that with Henry Martyn he can cry out, 'O the transcendent glory of this temple of souls, lively stones, perfect in all its parts, the purchase and the work of God!' Shall I ever be such a Christian?"

That unusual trials before us shall test our faith; unusual overturnings startle the church and the world, we must believe, if any thing at all can be predicated upon the signs of the times. Though we are unworthy of such a mission, and are altogether unfit with our present measure of faith, to go forth conquering and to conquer, yet through his church (feeble though she be) will the Redeemer work out the consummation of all things.

If, then, I have come to the kingdom for a time like this, and am to be used in hastening on the day of God, when the whole earth shall be filled with his glory, it behooves me to be ready. And while I stand amazed at the magnitude of the work that seems to be crushing me, the internal work of personal sanctification, and the external work of evangelizing the world, I hear a voice saying, "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts;" "Who art thou, O great mountain! before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."

In the wrestling "against the rulers of the darkness of this world," every man in his own unaided strength is weak as an infant, but with the "armor of light" he is invincible.

"These weapons of our holy war,  
Of what almighty power they are."

"The word is nigh thee, even in thine heart." The

directions to the spiritual warrior are specific. The path pointed out is plain. The command to "grow in grace" is not plainer than the method specified. The gift of the Son to redeem, is not more certain than the gift of the necessary MEANS to sanctify.

It is proposed, then, to consider the *means which God has appointed by which we may attain such a standard of gospel piety as will fit us for the exigency at hand.*

My brother, would you attain that state of faith in God and holy living which will enable you to meet your obligations in this day, when the Sun of Righteousness is rising to the meridian, — you must first understand fully the *position you occupy.*

"General," said a monarch to his favorite officer when he gave him a most important and perilous command, "I need not tell you that the safety of the whole army depends upon your valor." "Sire," was the noble reply, "my life is pledged to the sacred defence of this position; I shall die, if need be, at my post!"

By your Great Leader, who gave the most illustrious example of self-denial, and who in his own person shrank from no peril, — you now occupy an eminence from which an angel might well shrink. Your first duty is to be sensible of it. There is an issue at stake of infinite moment. You will not in time nor eternity be able to measure it. The eyes of the world, of good and of bad angels, and of the great God, are upon you. "You are a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid."

In the second place, you must resolve to *maintain* your position. The answer of your soul to tempta-

tion from any source whatever, must be, "Get thee behind me!" Your choice made once, is made for ever. That word of Jesus is ever before you, "What I say unto you, I say unto all — watch!" You must feel that supineness would be more perilous to you than sleep to a sentinel at his post.

"My mind is made up! the troops will get ready to march in fifteen minutes!" said the conqueror of Buena Vista, to his staff. With a decision more marked than this, must every Christian soldier who would be crowned victor in this war, exclaim, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed!"

It is unnecessary to repeat the trite axiom, that nothing can be attained without effort; and that both the effort and the good attained will usually have a relative proportion. If the effort be feeble, the attainment will be contemptible. This ought to be so; for this position on the summit of the "Hill Clear," with a life of usefulness in the past, and the land of Beulah just before, is worth some hard climbing. We will not be wafted to that eminence "on flowery beds of ease;" nor will we reach it by a feeble and sickly faith; neither will the angel that bore off Habakkuk by the hair of his head, carry us up in his strong arms. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force." With the man in the immortal allegory of the great dreamer, the pilgrim who would join that shining company in gold, must walk up boldly to the door of the palace and say to the man with the inkhorn, "put down my name, sir!" and then he must draw his sword and cut right and left, and give blows and take blows, and thus with many a dint upon his hel-

met, and many a blow upon his shield, pressing through the armed men, all scarred and bleeding, a voice clear and triumphant shall greet him, —

“Come in — come in,  
Eternal glory thou shalt win.”

If you would attain such an eminence in Christian character, as would enable you to win souls, you must make it your business. Every thing else must be subordinate to this. Here is your work, your appropriate and chosen work, and whatever else may be neglected, you dare not be unfaithful in this. This word must ring in your ear, and burn into your heart, “Go ye out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in.” There was a young man who had not for ten years entered the sanctuary. Over the usual and insincere plea, — “an inconsistent church,” he was stumbling down to hell. A good brother had his eye and heart upon him. He never lost sight of him. He felt that he was in danger and must be saved. And while the village was blessed with a rich token of Divine grace, after commending his young friend to God, approached him with deep emotion and invited him to go with him to the house of God. A sharp rebuff leaped impulsively to the lips of the young man, but he saw from the manner of his friend that he was in earnest. He paused a moment and replied, “I will go with you.” HE BROUGHT HIM TO JESUS.

The neglect of this duty is manifestly one reason why your faith is so dead and your piety so feeble. You do not come in contact with those things which would excite your sympathy and demand

your earnest labor. You do not consider that by your side there walketh a man who "is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him."

Hence, you must make yourself more familiar with the condition of the ungodly among whom you dwell. You associate with them, in all the political, commercial, and social relations of life — you are drawn together by a community of interests — why should you practically disregard those gigantic interests which involve their future destiny?

If you would be fitted for your work as a practical evangelist, you must appreciate the momentous work on which you enter. You must, in the light of revelation, make yourself more familiar with their condition, obligations, character, and destiny. You must also reflect that your opportunity of influencing and arresting them will soon be passed forever, and that in a very short time you will meet them at the bar of God. In this way you will best have your liveliest sympathies drawn out toward the impenitent. The more you dwell upon the condition of the Christless, without God in the present life, and without hope in the life to come, will your whole soul be stirred for their salvation. You see that they are lost and must be found, — that they are dead and must be made alive, — that they are out upon a stormy sea, without chart or compass or rudder, at the mercy of every billow, and in peril of immediate and eternal shipwreck. You cannot be quiet, you dare not sit still. With the muttering of such thunder in the sky you are constrained to seize hold of them as the angels did upon Lot and cry,



“Escape for thy life; tarry not in all the plain, escape to the mountain!”

I. First, and most preëminent of God’s appointed means of promoting faith and holiness, is the *living ministry*.

Nothing is a substitute for this. Tract distribution is good — colporteur efforts have been eminently blessed of God, and have brought living waters to many a thirsty one, and have polished many a gem for the Saviour’s crown, but no instrumentality can supplant this. “Go ye into all the world and *preach the gospel* to every creature.” “It pleased God by the foolishness of *preaching* to save them that believe.” “*Preach* the word.” “For I was sent not to baptize but to *preach* the gospel.”

And it is only echoing a sentiment which is never called in question when we affirm that he who does not attend upon the living ministry cannot grow in grace. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,” was the direction of the greatest of all preachers, to the careless Jews. And upon the hearts of American Christians favored with the best ministry since apostolic times, should break in thunder this same word, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” “The men of Nineveh will rise up in judgment against this generation,” for they heard, believed, and obeyed; while too often the message of God’s ambassadors is, to us, as though it had not been spoken.

An important question might here challenge the attention of the American churches: why is it that with a ministry of from twenty to thirty thousand,

with sanctuary privileges not surpassed by any on the globe, there is no more of that marked piety which we should naturally expect as the appropriate fruit? Multitudes of Christians, alas! that we must believe the vast majority of them within the sound of the gospel, seem to make no progress year after year. They have approximated no nearer to the New Testament model. They have no stronger faith nor higher self-denial. Their love for Zion is no more a passion,—their solicitude for sinners perishing around them is no greater,—and the claims of a dying world are no more keenly felt. Why this apathy under the living ministry? It is partly, if not in the main, owing to the fact that we have practically ignored that pointed caution of Jesus to the indolent Jews, “take heed how ye hear.”

Every man who hopes to attain this eminence in holy living, must listen to the preaching of the truth *frequently*, not only occasionally but habitually. He must regularly feed upon the word for the health of his soul. If he only come to the sanctuary now and then, he will pine away under the ravages of a consuming spiritual famine. He will be feeble and tottering, and the smallest breath of temptation will upset him.

He must hear the word with *simplicity* and godly sincerity.

The plain and straightforward path in which our fathers have walked to heaven, needs a good deal of fixing up, that the young and progress-loving Christians of our fast age may condescend to walk in it. And the ministry must spruce up, be more lively,

and say a great many keener things, and strike out newer and more inviting paths. The old, plain, simple, gospel preaching and gospel hearing, are but little in vogue; and any minister who holds on with old-fashioned partiality to the way of Christ and the apostles, is gravely lectured and set down as "behind the age" by the promising young men, who sit in the sanctuary not to hear the pure word, but to be galvanized with a little counterfeit electricity.

It was noble testimony which Jesus bore concerning Nathaniel, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." As if he had said, he is just what he seems to be; one whose life in all respects corresponds to his profession; there is not a particle of deceit about him; you see in his open face, almost as in a mirror, the feelings of his heart. It is a clear stream, you can see to the bottom. There is no hypocrisy there — nothing unbecoming a true, simple-hearted child of God.

Here is a sad want in our churches both on the part of our membership and ministry. Simple-hearted sincerity is almost an exiled virtue. There seems to be no place for it, and no use for it. The world is walking on stilts; every thing, everybody is repudiating the age of plain, unpretending piety.

We seem to have no *children* any longer. Even the enchanting simplicity of childhood is becoming a matter of history. The antiquary, curious after fossil remains, may find something of the kind in the age of Samuel the Prophet, in the time of Christ, and even down as far as the Puritan era. But we have children no longer. Deception, briskness,

double-dealing, shrewdness, and a pompous, swelling, bustling manner, are the traits that take now with men. And the Christian man too often feels that he must not be behind the times, that he must meet shrewdness with corresponding shrewdness, and if fashion and vanity and outward show are of better currency than open-hearted candor — why, the new coin must come into circulation.

Any change is to be deprecated which is at the expense of simplicity of character. That open candor which is the index of a guileless man, — that ingenuousness which scorns dissimulation, — that unostentatious piety which shrinks from parade, — that quiet, unobtrusive spirit which kept Mary at the feet of Jesus, to learn of him, should be revived.

This departure from gospel simplicity and assumption of the shrewd, bustling, pompous style of the world, is not only manifested in the conversation and dress and manners of individual Christians, but it is seen in the extravagance of church architecture, of church development, and forms of worship, and demands upon the ministry.

The writer would not constitute himself public censor with reference to these matters. But he is alarmed for the piety and moral power of the church, when such palpable departures from the spirit of primitive simplicity on a large scale everywhere abound.

How important for the hearer to receive the truth with “the simplicity that is in Christ;” to hear the word in meekness and love, — taking it as the plain message of God without equivocation; and through the power of the cross plainly preached, to be trans-

formed into a quiet Christian, "in whom there is no guile."

He must hear the word with *earnest attention* and *prayerful diligence*. He must hear for his life. There are important issues at stake. The ambassador of God is delivering a solemn message, under which the spiritual character of some hearer may be fixed for eternity. He must be earnest in delivering it, and it must be earnestly heard. In a short time speaker and hearer will stand before the throne, and the influence which the preached word has in forming a holy character, in increasing the power of faith and love, must be exerted soon. When the hearer is assured that every message must be a savor of death or of life, how important that he should hear with earnest and devout attention!

*Mariette Guyon*, the young French shepherdess, when thirteen years old, came under the notice of Felix Neff, and by him was instructed in the Protestant religion. Her Papist parents sent her to the mountains to tend her flock, afraid of the influence of Protestant teachers upon her inquiring mind. When the eager child saw any one approaching along the rocky path, she hastened down and accosted him with the question, "Where he was from?" If he replied that he came from some Catholic village, she suffered him to pass on without another word. But if he came from a Protestant town she detained him as long as she could, inquiring after the true way. Thus, as for her life, she heard the truth and treasured it up in a good and honest heart, and brought forth fruit at last an hundred-fold. "Go thou and do likewise!"

2. The *Sabbath* is one of God's appointed means of holiness. That Christian who would be eminently a man of God, for the times, must make the most of his Sabbaths. It would not be difficult to go through our churches and designate the men to whom the Sabbath of the Lord is a delight; who hail with unusual joy the breaking of the morn of that holy day, and cry, "This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it!" They are the men who "hunger and thirst after righteousness," who say, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." With what eager joy they anticipate those sacred hours, which in their quiet rest and calm devotion are a foretaste of the

"Endless Sabbath of our God."

Neither would it be difficult to designate those unto whom the Sabbath is *not* a delight, — to whom it is at best but a day of physical rest, — who use it for the outer and not for the inner man; esteeming simple rest of the body of more value than the progress of the soul toward heaven. Such professing Christians, overcome with the money-making toil of the week, deliberately use up all the precious moments of God's day, simply to recruit their over-taxed energies for another week's consecration to Mammon. They rise later than usual, for there is no business pressing. Though the "king's business requires haste!" they are in no hurry. The day is to be spent in some way, and they have no specific plan of making the most of holy time. If a man should have no more forethought with reference to

the daily business of life, he would be deemed insane. They enter in a lifeless manner upon the usual duties of the day. There is no soul in their devotions. There is no catechetical instruction in their household, no prompt response on the part of all its members, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go up unto the house of the Lord." The day is spent in listlessness, in formal worship, in the reading of newspapers, and social visiting, in worldly thought and worldly talk, and worldly planning for the future. Thus Sabbath after Sabbath begins and ends in vain. No wonder the attainments of such Christians are exceedingly meagre. "Perdidi diem! I have lost a day," is always a sad dirge for an immortal being to sing at any time. But for a ransomed child of God, sent upon a great errand, thus to loiter by the way and lose a Sabbath, is dreadful. The Sabbath is a day for rousing up the soul to holy diligence and activity, a day in which, by large measures of Divine grace, the pilgrim may be prepared for the sharp rocks and fierce conflicts of his journey, and by sweet communion with God may be filled with hope — to lose a Sabbath is a loss irreparable. Lord Jesus! we thank thee for the Sabbath — we hail it as a grand means of sanctification — we hallow it and make it to our souls a foretaste of that other rest, when

"All shall be piety, and all be peace."

3. You must *commune more with the word*. You must "search the Scriptures." With a right hearty amen you must assent to this experience, "O how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day!" You

must read your Bible not occasionally but habitually, not superficially, but thoroughly; not carelessly, but with earnest prayer; not a part of it, but the whole of it. You must understand what is the will of God and the gospel rule of self-denial. You are not to regard it as a book of cold, abstract ethics, a sort of philosophical compend, a rare collection of the best maxims and sayings the world ever saw. But you are to receive it as the voice of God; as your illuminator and guide. You are to feed upon it. It is to be manna to your hungry soul, and water to your thirsty spirit. You are to clasp it to your heart as your eternal treasure. It is to be your rule of faith and practice; that by which you intend to live, wish to die, and by which you are willing to be judged. With all its doctrines and duties you are to receive it; its warnings, as well as its invitations; its hatred of sin, as well as its pardon for the sinner; its hell as well as its heaven.

Commune much with the word of God. Are you in darkness? here is your light; are you feeble? here is your strength; are you desponding? here is your hope. Here, plain as the pathway through the sea, marked by the pillar of fire, is the way of life.

"The simplest traveller need not err." Why should you perish when the angel is above you, pointing to the gushing fountain? If you would be a strong Christian, the "word of God must dwell in you richly." If you would mount up as on eagles' wings, if you would run and not be weary, walk and not faint, you must say with Dr. Ide, "Thou dear old English Bible! we will not forsake thee. Thou mayest be slandered and charged with blas-



phemy, but we will not part with thee! and when we lay our heads upon our last bed of sickness, this slandered, blessed book shall be our pillow, and in its own glorious words, we will breathe our last prayer, — Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

4. Would you attain this state, then be in more intimate *fellowship with all the holy*.

By the “great cloud of witnesses,” brethren, “lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset you.” Walk more with Enoch, who walked with God. Commune more with the heart of Elijah and David and Isaiah and John and Paul and Brainerd and Evarts and Payson. They have reached the summit of the mount. Let them attract you thither. Make them your bosom companions. It is not only true that “a man is known by the company he keeps,” but his character is formed by it. If your intimate friends are worldly, you will imbibe their worldly spirit. Selfishness begets selfishness, and love begets love. No one can make such men as Page, Martyn, and McCheyne his daily companions, without being in the end transformed into their likeness.

5. Especially must you *commune much with the heart of Christ*. You must know him. You must drink in his spirit, you must be strengthened by his faith and softened by his love; you must have your tenderest sympathies for the lost excited by his compassion; you must be energized by his zeal, and be sanctified by his truth. If you are worldly and selfish, it is so because you live so far from Christ. If you are a mammon worshipper, it is because you commune more with the god of this world than with

Christ. If you bear no daily cross and endure no self-denial; if your faith is weak and your life a libel on the Christian name, it is because you do not abide in Christ.

The valleys of France have been the theatre of some of the most bloody persecutions, and at the same time some of the most marked triumphs of Christian faith, the world ever saw. On one occasion a young Christian being interrogated sharply by a papist priest with reference to her faith and hope, replied, that she "trusted alone in Jesus Christ!" The priest exclaimed impatiently, "Jesus Christ! it is always Jesus Christ! do you think Jesus Christ can do every thing?"

"Yes," she replied, "Jesus is every thing, 'Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord!'"

In a word, you must *pray more*. You never will be holy; your light will never shine; you will never have moral power, and the beatitude of him who turns a sinner from the error of his ways, will never be yours, unless you are a praying man.

The sentiment, "an honest man is the noblest work of God," has been reëchoed by thousands who cared not for the truth it was supposed to contain. But from the Bible we learn that the noblest man is he who is a "prince with God and prevails." I had rather be Abraham, interceding with God for the doomed cities of the plain, than the honored ambassador of our republic to the proudest foreign court.

I had rather be one of that immortal trio, Moses,

Daniel, and Job, whom God eulogized, than to be one of a triumvirate who should divide the empire of the world. O the joy and the power of the praying man!

The writer has often stood by the bedside of one whose sick-chamber seemed to be the vestibule of heaven; angels of light were there around that suffering child of God, who for years had been a "prince and prevailed." Oh! to be in daily communion with the great God!

You must pray more *habitually*. The spirit of prayer is never attained by spasmodic effort. We are too impulsive in our habits of devotion. We hope in our spiritual pride, by a sudden flight to reach the summit of the mount of God, and are not undeceived till we find our waxen wings melted in the sun. The young convert, in the first impulse of pardoned sin, thinks that he is strong, that his character is formed, and that no Apollyon will ever trip him up and "give him a dreadful fall." But he is mistaken, he is but a child, to be developed by prayer and labor. He will not stand fire on the field of battle, like an old soldier around whose brow a thousand bullets have whistled. He must cultivate the habit of prayer; "evening and morning and noon" he must be found wrestling with God. This is no child's play, this "crucifying of the flesh with the affections and lusts;" this is no holiday tilt, this conflict with the "world, the flesh, and the devil." Only they who habitually "wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength."

He who would thus be a "prince with God" must be *sincere* in prayer. He is to deal with the great

Searcher of hearts. Every thought, passion, and emotion is open to his eye. He cannot be mocked. "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me."

In the dying sayings of Bunyan, the following impressive passage occurs. "Before you enter into prayer, ask your soul these questions:— To what end, oh my soul, art thou retired into this place? Art thou come to commune with the Lord in prayer? Is he present, will he hear thee? Is thy business slight, or concerneth it not the welfare of thy soul? What words wilt thou use to move him to compassion? When thou prayest, art thou more anxious that thy heart should be without words, than that thy words should be without heart?"

If you would attain such a holy eminence, you must pray with *self-abasement* and *self-abandonment*, the two great elements of the prayer of faith. You must place yourself in the position of the publican, and his prayer must be yours. You must cast yourself upon sovereign grace, with the spirit of Esther,—"I will go in unto the king, and if I perish—I perish." With "holy boldness" you must venture on Him. You must not be afraid to trust him, if you would be "filled with all his fulness." Never shall the writer forget the emotion with which an awakened sinner once sang those words,—

" Venture on Him, venture WHOLLY,  
Let no other trust intrude!"

Days of joy and of gloom, of light and darkness, have gone by since then. Yet amidst the sharp temptations of Satan and the whisperings of unbe-

lief; in the heat and burden of the day; under the crushing responsibilities of the ministry; amid the crumbling of early hopes, when the "proud waters rolled over his soul" — there have been but few moments when he could not say, — "My soul, rest thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him!"

Six Christian wives met once a week for special prayer to God for six unconverted husbands. They were humble, persevering, and united in their petitions. To them there was an emphasis in this word, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." They believed God. One year passed by, and one husband was found at the cross. They continued to pray until they prevailed. They had a great object before them — they urged a great promise with great faith, and they obtained a large reward.

Said the writer once to a mother whose husband had already joined the company "who walk in white," when her son was growing up to manhood, in the midst of revivals, regardless of God and holy things, "are you not sometimes overwhelmed with fear that one who can resist mercy so long, will be obdurate forever?" With a trembling lip and voice the response came welling up from a full heart, "O, sir, I cannot believe that a child of such faith and prayer will be lost! My trust is in a covenant-keeping God."

"Be it unto you according to your faith."

If you would "run up this shining way," with the angels of God on each side of you, you must *pray in earnest.*

The patriarch whose name perpetuates the triumph of his faith, had reached a crisis through which he knew he could not pass without the arm of the God of Abraham. He was "left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Save the Lord's prayer, there is no better modelled petition recorded in the Bible than the prayer of Jacob. In his earnestness, we are reminded of another of whom it is said, "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly." It was an earnestness whose language was, "I am in a great strait, no one but God can help me, and I will not let him go until he does!" The danger was pressing, he had no time to hunt up rhetorical figures, nor surprise the Lord with an elaborate argument; here is no pompous verbiage, nor unmeaning tautology. **ESAU WAS AT HAND.** True, he had already wrestled to the break of day, but let the sun roll up to the zenith, let the day wane, let another long night of doubt and darkness come down, and let the morning of another day break, I shall hold on to thy promise. I shall prevail, for "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Oh! it is enough, the victory is thine! "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel, for as a prince hast thou power with God and hast prevailed!" No wonder the four hundred rough desperadoes of Mount Seir stood amazed, when as the brothers met, they saw the lion changed to the lamb! They knew not that the **PREVAILER** stood before them.

Would you thus win, and at the last as one who has turned many to righteousness, shine in the king-

dom of your Father, you also, as a prince must have power with God.

There is only one other means of promoting faith and holiness, and of advancing the work of practical evangelism, upon which the limit and the aim of this essay will permit us to dwell, namely :—

6. The *power of association* in Christian conference, mutual admonition, and united prayer. Next to the hearing of the word, the proper improvement of the Sabbath, the careful study of the Scriptures, with the attendant influence of the Holy Spirit, and personal communion with God, must this great means of personal holiness take its position.

It was one of the first instrumentalities appointed by the Great Head, one of the first employed, and has ever been attended with the richest blessing, until, as a means of grace, in the exigencies of the church, it has come to be regarded as indispensable. The writer is thoroughly aware of the fact that the subject is regarded by many as threadbare, and, he is afraid by some, as unwelcome. It has been harped upon from the days of Paul, it has been presented in every possible light, and by the most eloquent in the church, enforced upon the consciences of Christians, by argument, by facts, and by Scripture. No proper means has been left untried to rouse up the torpid pulse of the church to this duty, with how little success the state of our prayer-meetings will attest.

Unquestionably, the most alarming token of the spiritual death which reigns, is, the condition of our churches in this particular. Who come up to our

meetings for prayer, and conference? How many meet habitually "with one accord in one place?" How many thus admonish one another? Who are found at our concerts for prayer for colleges, for revivals, for the conversion of this world to God? If only those who delight in such assemblages, and who 'meet often one with another,' can furnish credible evidence of piety, how appalling is the proportion of professors of religion who will hear that word of dismay, "Depart from me, for I know you not!"

Brethren, have we forgotten such words as these, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often ONE TO ANOTHER; and the Lord hearkened and heard it." Listen to it, ye who delight not in the place of conference and prayer, "and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." "Exhort ONE ANOTHER daily." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing ONE ANOTHER, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

No duty is more sacredly enjoined in the Bible than that of association for Christian improvement. No man can throw himself out of such communion and be safe. He needs the advice, the admonition, and the sympathy of his brethren. Every Christian whose heart has been in communion with the heart of Christ, himself becomes a magnet to attract other hearts. That which was leavened becomes, in turn, leaven to the rest. And he who by voluntary choice,



or by circumstances, habitually neglects this means of sanctification, is in great peril.

In the early history of the church, when revivals of great purity and power rolled their waves over the whole Roman empire, and in later Puritan times, when the preaching of the word was greatly honored, much dependence was placed upon UNITED PRAYER. It might be well for us, who place so much contempt upon this appointed instrumentality, to "stand in the paths and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and find rest to our souls."

"I am confirmed in the opinion," says that observing and godly man, Felix Neff, "that whosoever, even were he an angel, should neglect such meetings, under any pretext whatever, is very little to be depended on, and cannot be reckoned among the sheep of Christ's fold." On his death-bed, writing to his distant flock, he says, "I exhort you most particularly not to neglect the assembling of yourselves together . . . . where all may exhort, and where all are edified; where each may communicate to his brethren his own sentiments, and the illumination and grace which he has received from God. These are the only assemblies which can strictly be called mutual, where there is communion between brethren, and where God has promised to give his blessing."

Upon these assemblages the great Head of the church has placed the seal of his approbation. Here the weak are strengthened, the ignorant are instructed, the wavering are placed upon the Rock, the

desponding are filled with hope, and the flame of brotherly love burns with a clear and steady light.

“Here pardoned rebels sit and hold  
Communion with their Lord.”

Here the Holy Ghost descends, and the faith and zeal and practical working talent of the *whole* church are developed.

One of the most precious revivals of religion that ever came to the writer's knowledge, occurred when the church was deprived of the services of their pastor; and from the beginning to the end of it, not one sermon was preached. They met for prayer, conference, and inquiry; and each member, strengthened by the Spirit, felt himself commissioned to go forth and labor as an ambassador for God.

Brethren! there are blessings, great and abiding, which Christ has promised to bestow upon the church and the world in answer to UNITED prayer, which we are not otherwise authorized to expect. Then, with such specific promises upon record, and with such facts before us, as crowd the experience of every true child of God, how can we, how dare we, by our negligence, place contempt upon this means?

## CHAPTER VII.

### MOTIVES TO HOLY LIVING.

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“ARISE, THEREFORE, AND BE DOING, AND THE LORD BE WITH THEE.”

“AND HE SAITH UNTO ME, SEAL NOT THE SAYINGS OF THE PROPHECY OF THIS BOOK, FOR THE TIME IS AT HAND. HE THAT IS UNJUST LET HIM BE UNJUST STILL, AND HE THAT IS FILTHY LET HIM BE FILTHY STILL, AND HE THAT IS RIGHTEOUS LET HIM BE RIGHTEOUS STILL, AND HE THAT IS HOLY LET HIM BE HOLY STILL. AND BEHOLD I COME QUICKLY, AND MY REWARD IS WITH ME, TO GIVE EVERY MAN ACCORDING AS HIS WORK SHALL BE. I AM ALPHA AND OMEGA, THE BEGINNING AND THE END, THE FIRST AND THE LAST. BLESSED ARE THEY THAT DO HIS COMMANDMENTS THAT THEY MAY HAVE RIGHT TO THE TREE OF LIFE, AND MAY ENTER IN THROUGH THE GATES INTO THE CITY.”

WE have, as elaborately as our limits would permit, stated plainly some of the obvious and *radical defects* in Christian character which retard the Redeemer's kingdom. We have dwelt upon the *causes* of such defects. We have contemplated the *New Testament model of Christian character and life*. We have endeavored to explain and illustrate that *faith* and *self-denial* so important in the work of winning souls, and so essential as a test of genuine

discipleship ; together with the *means* of a higher attainment in holy living.

It now remains for us to urge the *peculiar obligations of all Christians in this day of cumulative responsibilities to attain such a standard*. It would be stating a self-evident proposition were we to say, that the present measure of faith and holy living is altogether inadequate to accomplish the work now before the church of Christ ; inadequate at any time—surely for the martyr age, and the era of apostolic self-denial—but quite as inadequate now in this age of covetousness which is idolatry—of formalism and of infidelity baptized with the name of Religion.

Let us bear in mind, brethren, that when any great triumph of the church of God over the wickedness of men, or any great victory of individual Christians over the world has been attained, it was uniformly preceded by unusual developments of faith and holy living. It was so in the days of Noah. It was so in the days of Moses, preceding the exodus of the Jews. It was so on the part of Ezra and Nehemiah, preceding the rebuilding of the temple. It was so with Paul and the apostolic church, preceding the first era of primitive persecution. It was so with Luther preceding and accompanying the great Reformation. It was so on the part of American and Scotch Christians, preceding the great awakening of 1740, when revivals of great power swept over the land. It was so in 1800–10, preceding the first general development of the modern missionary spirit, which has now planted the banner of the cross in India, Africa, China, and so

many isles of the sea. And thus it ever will be, thus it should be. It is a part of that great spiritual law by which he, who is the Alpha and Omega, proposes to secure the spread of the truth. He might speak, and the universe would be bathed in light—every dark corner of the world would be illumined with gospel radiance, and the habitations of cruelty would become the habitations of piety and love. He might commission bands of holy angels, who now encircle his throne, to descend, and, without money, faith, or self-denial, proclaim to all the world good news and glad tidings.

But this is not His plan. His kingdom on the earth is built up by faith and prayer; by self-denial and holy living. No great victory of light over darkness has ever been won without them, and never will be. And in the overturning about to take place—in the downfall of institutions based upon superstition and defended by despotism; in the running to and fro of knowledge in the earth; in the crumbling of heathen pagodas and the erection of Christian temples; in the opening of that morn when a nation shall be born in a day, and the whole earth be filled with his glory; the great Captain of our salvation says, “Be it unto you according to your faith.”

The present measure of faith and self-denial can hardly keep pace with the world, much less can it be aggressive and gain largely upon the apostasy. To secure a firm, steady, triumphant advance of the church against this gigantic foe, the measure of faith must be increased, and the cumulative power of holy hearts beating with Christ's, beating with love,

and beating altogether, must be felt over all the world.

This appeal from God to the church to attain and exhibit a higher degree of holy living with special reference to the salvation of souls, is one that must be met,—not by excuses, because the service is hard and the cross heavy,—not by proxy, for every man must meet, in a manly way, his own responsibilities,—not by fair promises which he has no intention of keeping, like the flippant son who said, “I go, sir, and went not,”—not by procrastination, for it must be met now, “the night cometh in which no man can work.” This is one of those grand issues between the soul and God, which cannot be avoided. And there are certain facts and principles underlying the appeal which render the motives to heed it cumulative and overwhelming.

One motive arises from the *appeal* itself. This appeal is of great moment. Whether we consider Him who makes it, our God and Father, our Redeemer, the great Head of the church, our Prophet, Priest, and King; or the circumstances under which the appeal is made; or the infinite interests at stake. When the stirring appeal came down to the people of the old thirteen colonies, at the Declaration of American Independence, every man who shouldered his musket, had confidence both in the men who made the appeal and in the cause. Here is a cause infinitely more just, more grand, with interests of infinite moment in peril.

The appeal is made under such circumstances that every one feels that he is personally addressed. When the army of Gideon by two tests had been

reduced to three hundred men, every one of that small band felt that he was under the eye of his leader. When Leonidas sent back all but three hundred men who stood with him to defend the straits of Thermopylæ, there was not one of them who did not feel that on the boldness of his heart and might of his arm, the issue of that fight depended.

*This* is an appeal made under the most solemn circumstances and motives, made before the church and world, and God and angels, with the most tremendous issues distinctly before us; and the eternal weal and woe of millions of the race depending under God upon our response.

We have but to glance at the gigantic work to be accomplished in our own country, to find a motive potent enough to waken and energize each Christian heart.

Look at the *extent* of our country. No one can, without a great effort, form any adequate idea of its vastness. "We may, perhaps, form the most just idea, by procuring a map and cutting out one of the older States and seeing how often we can lay it down on some of the new States and territories. Let Massachusetts, for example, a State among the most influential in the Union, be such a divisor. Ohio and Kentucky will each make five such States; Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, each, seven; Missouri, nine; Texas, forty-four; the territory ceded in the treaty with Mexico, seventy-two; our whole country will make four hundred and forty-eight such States as Massachusetts."

What a country to evangelize! and what faith and prayer and self-denial must precede the spiritual

conquest of this great land to the kingdom of the Son of God.

Look at the *condition* of our country. What Christian can contemplate without lively interest, and, were it not for the word of God, without dismay, the tide of emigration pouring in upon us. The number of foreigners who now annually seek our shores as an asylum from aristocratic oppression, and monarchical despotism and unequal social rights, or for purposes of gain, or to escape gaunt famine and absolute starvation, cannot fall far short of one half a million. With their character, their religion, and their social influence upon society at large we are familiar. Under God, what can save our churches from corruption, our communities from vice, and our republic from premature decay? In absolute self-defence, ignoring for a moment any higher law of love toward the millions crowding upon us, we must do something to leaven this mass. We cannot come in constant contact with it in our present state and live. With no higher type of faith and self-denial, we shall gravitate but not attract. It will be death to us, but not life to them. But aside from the obligation of self-preservation, what a motive to holy living does the moral and social and spiritual condition of these masses furnish. Look at them filling up our cities, swarming upon our wharves, crowding our steamboats and railroad cars, darkening the pathway of our great internal improvements, riding upon the top of the first billow that breaks upon our unsettled territories. Look at them swelling our mobs, carousing at our grocer-



ies, making our nights hideous, filling our penitentiaries and almshouses, and swelling our pauper tax. Look at them in their ignorance and degradation, their infidelity and profanity, the slaves of a designing priestcraft, and the dupes of unprincipled demagogues. Behold them in all their relations to the political, educational, and religious interests of this land, and there are no people on the footstool of God to be found, who have larger demands upon the pity of the philanthropist and the self-denying labors of the Christian.

How shall we reach them? How break through the wall of adamant which superstition and vicious customs have built around them? How shall we meet the French and Italian and German and Irish and Portuguese and Swiss and Chinese emigrant as he lands upon the shores of the New World, and in his own tongue proclaim to him the revelation of God? We cannot do it without a high degree of that "faith which works by love and purifies the heart."

Here is a work at once grand and imperative; gigantic enough for the broadest Christian philanthropy, hard enough for the truest self-denial—a work of practical evangelism. Is the church of God in America ready to enter upon it?

Look, too, at the *educational* condition of our country. What an appalling number of adults—1,053,420 in all, who can neither write their own name, nor read their own vote, and to whom the word of God is a sealed book.

Look at the myriad types of *infidelity*, from the

unblushing atheist, whose "eyes stand out with fatness," to the most fashionable and most approved form of German transcendentalism.

Look at the heaving of our *political* volcano. Witness the triumph of the "lower law" policy, the utter disregard of the claims of God by many of our public men, the total want of legislative conscience, and the complete shipwreck of public faith.

Look at the *moral* condition of our country. Sad enough is it to make an angel weep. With her present measure of piety, can the church of God hope to combat successfully with intemperance, slavery, Sabbath desecration, and profanity — those four mammoth sins, prolific fountains of so many streams of death?

Look once more at the external and internal *religious* condition of our country, — our divisions and subdivisions, our want of practical oneness and moral power, and the almost insurmountable obstacles to the salvation of souls, and conversion of this world to God, which exist in the bosom of the church. Look at all these things, and but for the grace of God, we are appalled; but with that grace, we feel that "we can do all things through Christ strengthening us." In all these elements of death and gigantic hinderances, the man of faith but hears this command, — "Arise, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee."

But there is a more extensive view of this subject, which if possible furnishes us with a more cogent motive, and to which our limits only permit us to allude. The work to be done which now challenges

our faith, is the conversion of the whole world to God.

And the most indubitable proof of that stupor, the fruit of a low standard of piety, which has settled down upon us, brethren, is the little emotion with which we contemplate such a work. Great Head of the church! can we be the purchase of thy blood, thy chosen ones, upon whom thou wilt write thy name, and whom on that great coronation day thou wilt crown as kings forever, — and yet without emotion contemplate a dying world!

In the graphic language of one whose faith and devotion have seldom been equalled, and in the modern church never surpassed, — “to say nothing of the multitudes who are crowding the way to death in the most favored regions; to say nothing of whole nations in the Romish and Greek churches, who though they bear the Christian name are apparently living without God in the world; to say nothing of hundreds of thousands of nominal Christians scattered through Asia and Africa who scarcely retain any thing of Christianity but the name; to say nothing of three millions of Jews, it is a distressing truth that more than two thirds of the population of the globe are still buried under Pagan or Moham-medan darkness, and are as abominably wicked as sin can make them. Of that wretched portion of our race it cannot be computed that, apart from infants and small children, less than seven millions and a half die a year, twenty thousand a day, and eight or nine hundred every hour!” \*

Think of it, thou supine and ease-loving Christian,

\* Dr. Griffin.

the whole globe, with few exceptions, for six thousand years pouring her mighty adult population down the broad road! See them mingling in strange heterogeneousness of language and of customs, but in striking homogeneousness of character, aim, and destiny, the rich man and poor man, the bond and free, the erudite and ignorant, from every continent and tribe, untold millions rolling on a mighty flood of living, sinning, immortal souls through the "wide gate" and the "broad way."

If a man can be found in the church of God, insensible to such a motive, he surely must be a stranger to Divine love. He certainly can have no sympathy with those who obey the "great commission," nor can he share their triumph.

Another reason why the appeal should have great weight with us, is because, for the accomplishment of this work *so much has been done to prepare the way.*

"Now behold in my poverty (marg.) I have prepared for the house of the Lord one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million of silver, and of brass and iron without weight, for it is in abundance, — timber also and stone also have I prepared. Moreover there are workmen with thee, masons and carpenters (marg.) in abundance, and all manner of skilful men for every sort of work. Of the gold, silver, brass, and iron, there is no number." The glory of the temple was not owing more to the wisdom of Solomon, than to the care and toil of David in furnishing the materials. No wonder it rose up as if by magic.

Now look abroad and see the material already

furnished to your hand, for this great work of evangelism! Look at our colleges and schools; our churches, and Bibles, and tracts, and presses, and missionary boards, and languages conquered, and missionary stations, and at the whole array of auxiliaries and means. Paul and Barnabas, Silas and Timothy, had none of these; the early martyrs who died under the cloud, the men who bore the heat and burden of the day, who in some sense were like David, "men of war," had none of these; Luther had none; but we have the gold, the silver, and the workmen in abundance — therefore let us "arise and be doing." Who knoweth but we are come to the kingdom for a time like this!

Such an augmentation of faith and holiness is the only effectual way to *unite all the people of God in a practical oneness*; to annihilate all petty differences and partisan zeal; and to develop and concentrate all their moral power in one united and holy crusade against the foes of God, and the enemies of evangelical religion.

In the era of the crusades to recover the holy sepulchre from the Saracen, and now after fifteen hundred years first practically achieved by diplomacy, Briton, Scot, and Frenchman all met as brethren in arms, and so long as no unholy feud arose, they were victorious. So, if in the holiest of all crusades, we would not be driven in disgrace from the battle field, we must be one.

"Let party names no more  
The Christian world o'erspread;  
Gentile and Jew and bond and free  
Are ONE in Christ, their head."

To secure such a standard of holy living, the writer in the Apocalypse has furnished us with other motives. He tells us, *THE TIME IS AT HAND*,—the consummation of all things,—the fulfilment of prophecy in the triumph of the gospel,—the time for the rider upon the white horse to go forth, conquering and to conquer,—the time for closing up the remedial scheme,—the time when the Book shall be sealed, and

“Love’s redeeming work be o’er.”

The time of the millennium will soon be upon us,—it will soon be past,—the spiritual temple will be finished,—the angels with great rejoicing will lay the last stone upon its summit. “Then what thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.” God cannot wait for you—the angels will not wait, who “shout the harvest home”—truth will not wait—providences will not wait.

“God’s purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour.”

Would you, therefore, proclaim “Jesus and the Resurrection” to the fifty-seven millions of Africa, you must make haste, for the time is at hand! Would you cry, “Behold the Lamb of God,” to the three hundred millions of China, you must make haste. Would you cry to the hundred and thirty millions of India, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!” you must make haste. Would you cry to the heedless thousands in a gospel land, who with mammon and ambition

and lust hurrying them along, are pressing on the road to death,

“ Stop, O sinner ! stop and think,  
Before you further go ! ”

you must make haste. Why stand ye all the day idle ? Enter with a hearty good-will into the vineyard, if ye would work for the Master, and save many “ a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.”

The time of *reward* is at hand. “ Behold, I come quickly ! and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” The time when the king shall say to them “ who, by patient continuance in well doing,” and self-denying evangelism, have taken up their cross daily to follow Christ, — “ well done, good and faithful servant,” — and of the supine and indolent men who rolled in wealth while the Lord’s treasury was empty ; who sat in their tent door, at ease, while their brethren went up to fall on the field of battle ; who loved houses and lands and friends and SELF more than Christ ; — he shall say, “ Take ye the wicked and unprofitable servant, and cast him into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

We are soon to enter upon our reward. The throne of judgment will soon be set. “ Behold, I come quickly.” “ Blessed is that servant that watcheth.” “ My reward is with me.” I shall do justice to all, injustice to none. If they have “ kept my commandments they shall have right to the tree of

life, and shall enter in through the gates into the city." If they have endured hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, they shall receive the crown which the righteous Judge will give them at that day. If fainthearted in the day of peril; if they have not run well, but turned back, more afraid of the frown of man than the anger of God, they rest on the hypocrite's hope, and shall receive the hypocrite's doom.

If they have borne upon their hearts God's little ones, to whom they have given a cup of cold water, — if they have gone with the spirit of benevolence and self-denial to make known the message of Divine love to the dying, — they shall hear amid the swelling of angelic harps, "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Brethren in Christ, heirs together of the grace of God, joint-heirs with Christ in the same inheritance: here is your work. Here the sublime and appropriate mission to which He invites you. Here are the *motives* with which infinite love would prompt you to holy living, and self-denying evangelism. What say ye? "The Master is come, and calleth for you." Will you arise to meet him? Will you say with an intense ardor, "Lord, here am I, send me!"

" All that I am, and all I have,  
Shall be forever thine."

The world is perishing, — the vast, benighted heathen world, for which Christ died, and in reference to which He has said, "Go ye into all the



WORLD and preach the gospel to every creature," — the world in darkness and in guilt is perishing, and I *must* do something to save it.

*Sinners* are perishing, — sinners in a gospel land, to whom the waters of life are as though they were not flowing, and the gospel feast is as though it had not been spread; and to whom the glad tidings, alas, perverted and rejected as openly and contemptuously as the Jewish high-priest had rejected the Son of God, have become a "savor of death unto death," — sinners, old and young, of every condition and type of guilt, are hastening to the second death, and I *must* do something to arrest them.

We have seen that even our own country is in many respects in a sad condition, and yet this country is in advance of most, if not all, the nations of the earth in its good institutions — a country eminently blessed of God — a country founded upon faith and prayer, from the beginning consecrated to the God of freedom, and which may yet become the model republic for the world, and upon whose hill-tops and along whose valleys may first resound the song of the millennium. Oh, I must do something to save my country, and aid her to accomplish her destiny.

And the *church* of the great Redeemer, bought with his blood, and sealed with his Spirit, now everywhere too much under the despotism of mammon, and in bondage to covetousness, rent with unholy schisms, and her light obscured, needs my example, toil, and prayers. She must arise from the dust, put on her beautiful garments, and go forth in the strength of God, to this great battle, "conquering and to conquer," and I *must* do something to hasten such a consummation.

At a time when the Macedonian cry is multiplying with greater intensity; when the guilt of an apostate world is deepening; when the instrumentalities raised up by the providence of God are increasing; when the responsibility of the universal church, and the obligations of each individual Christian are augmenting; when the signs of the times that foreshadow great turnings and overturnings are cumulating — can we, DARE we stand still? At such a time, shall I, a ransomed sinner, dependent on sovereign mercy, heir to a crown whose smallest jewel infinitely outweighs in value all the diadems of earth; I who hope to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb when the new heaven and the new earth appear, shall I forget the grand mission on which I am sent, and have no part in the work of PRACTICAL EVANGELISM?

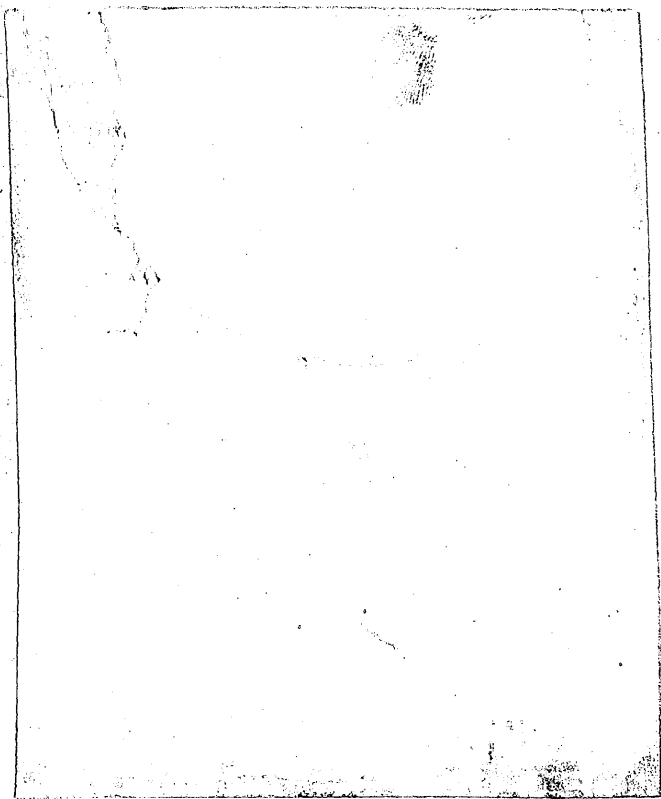
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